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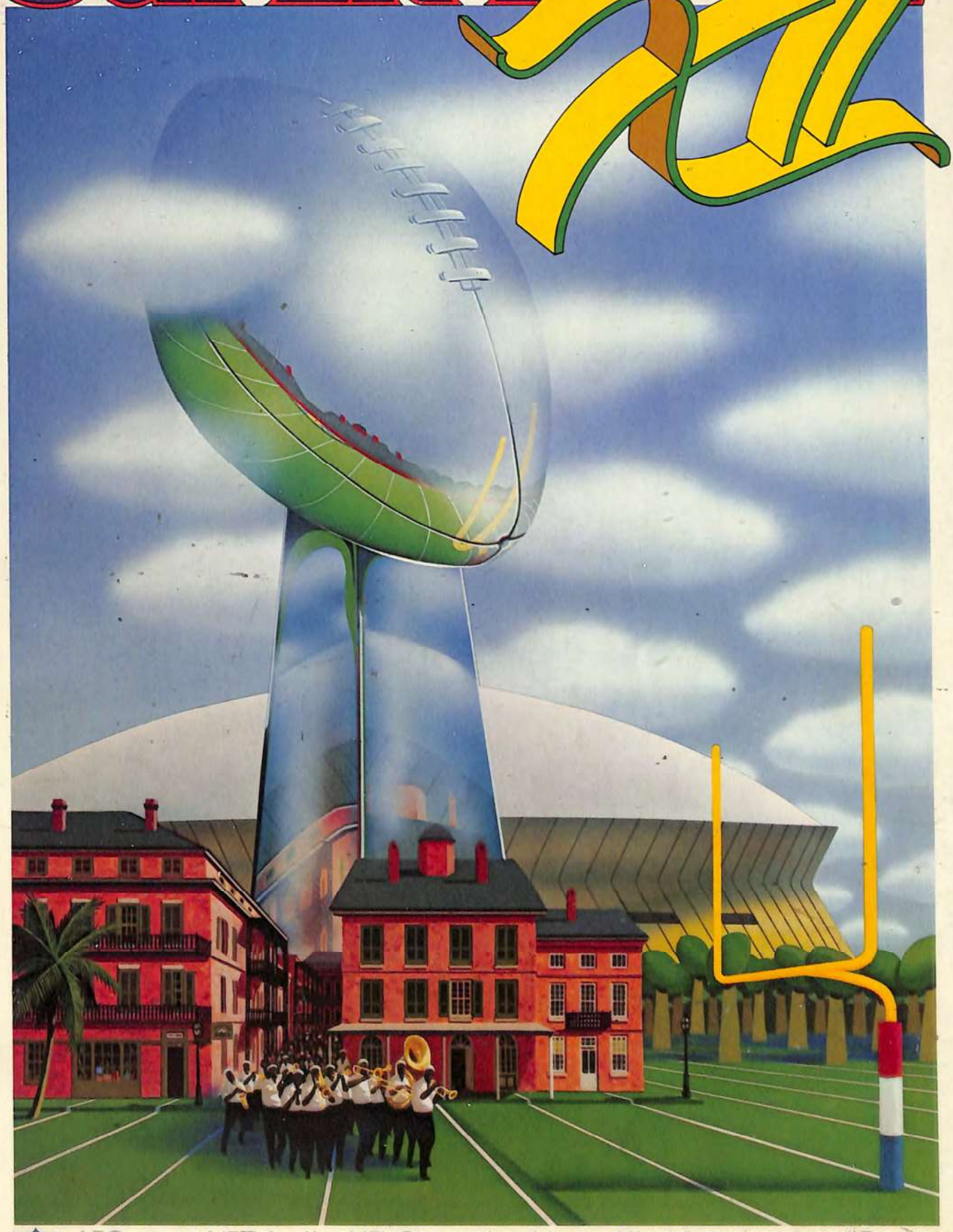

AFC versus NFC for the NFL Championship and the Vince Lombardi Trophy
Sunday, January 15, 1978 5:00 P.M. Louisiana Superdome, New Orleans

An Official Publication of the National Football League

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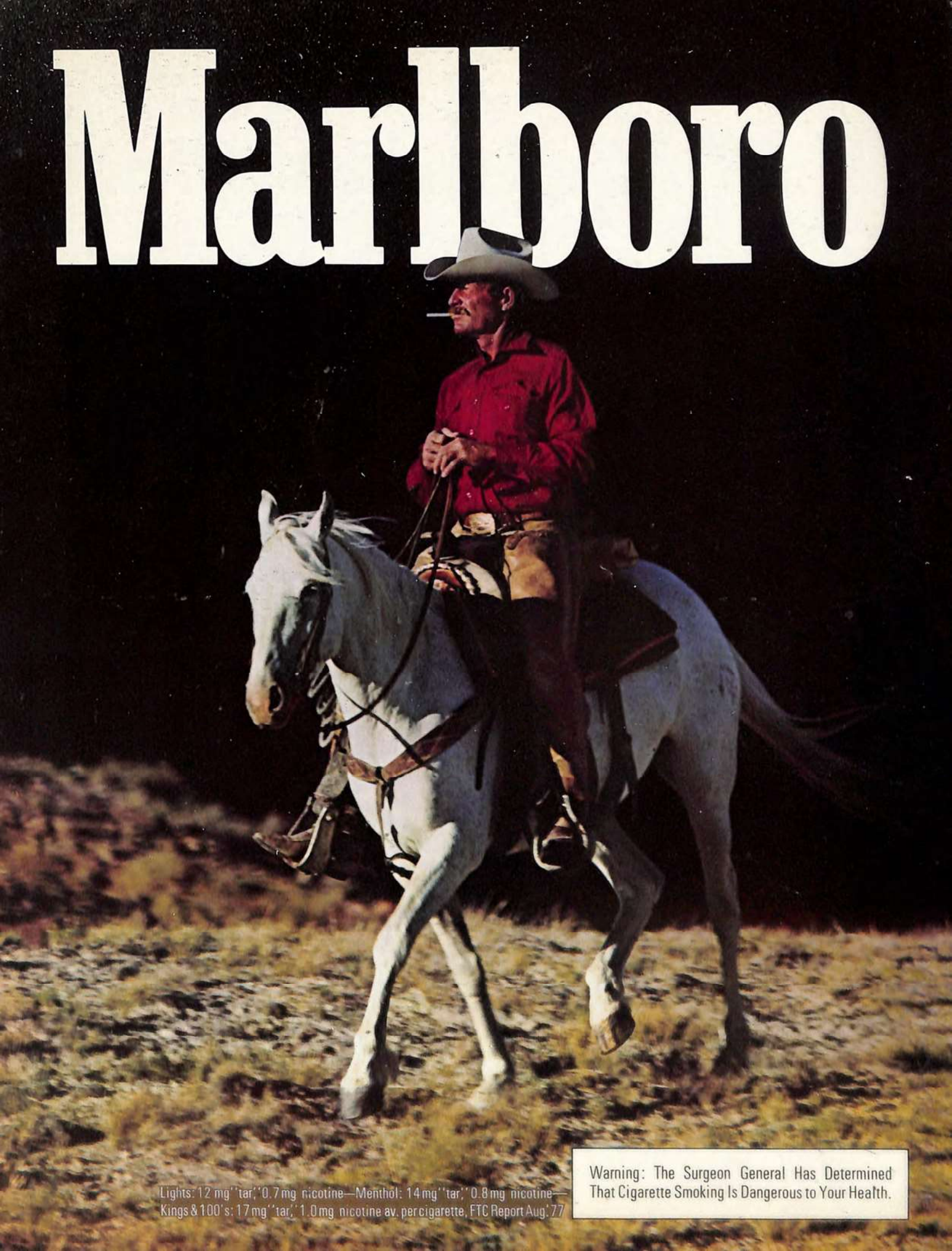
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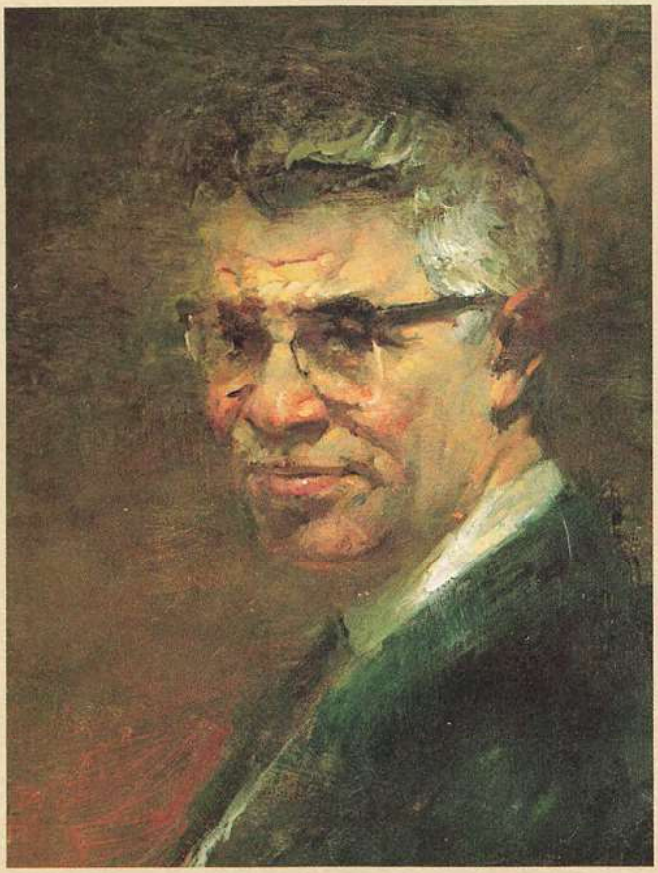

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AFC versus NFC for the NFL Championship
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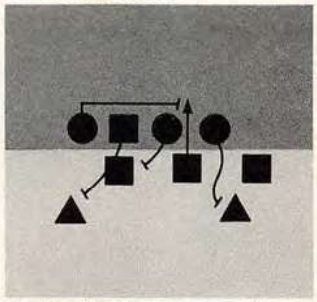

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On the cover: Super Bowl XII theme art by Donald Moss.

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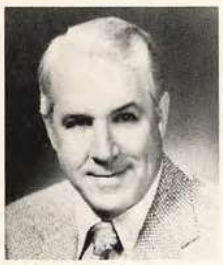

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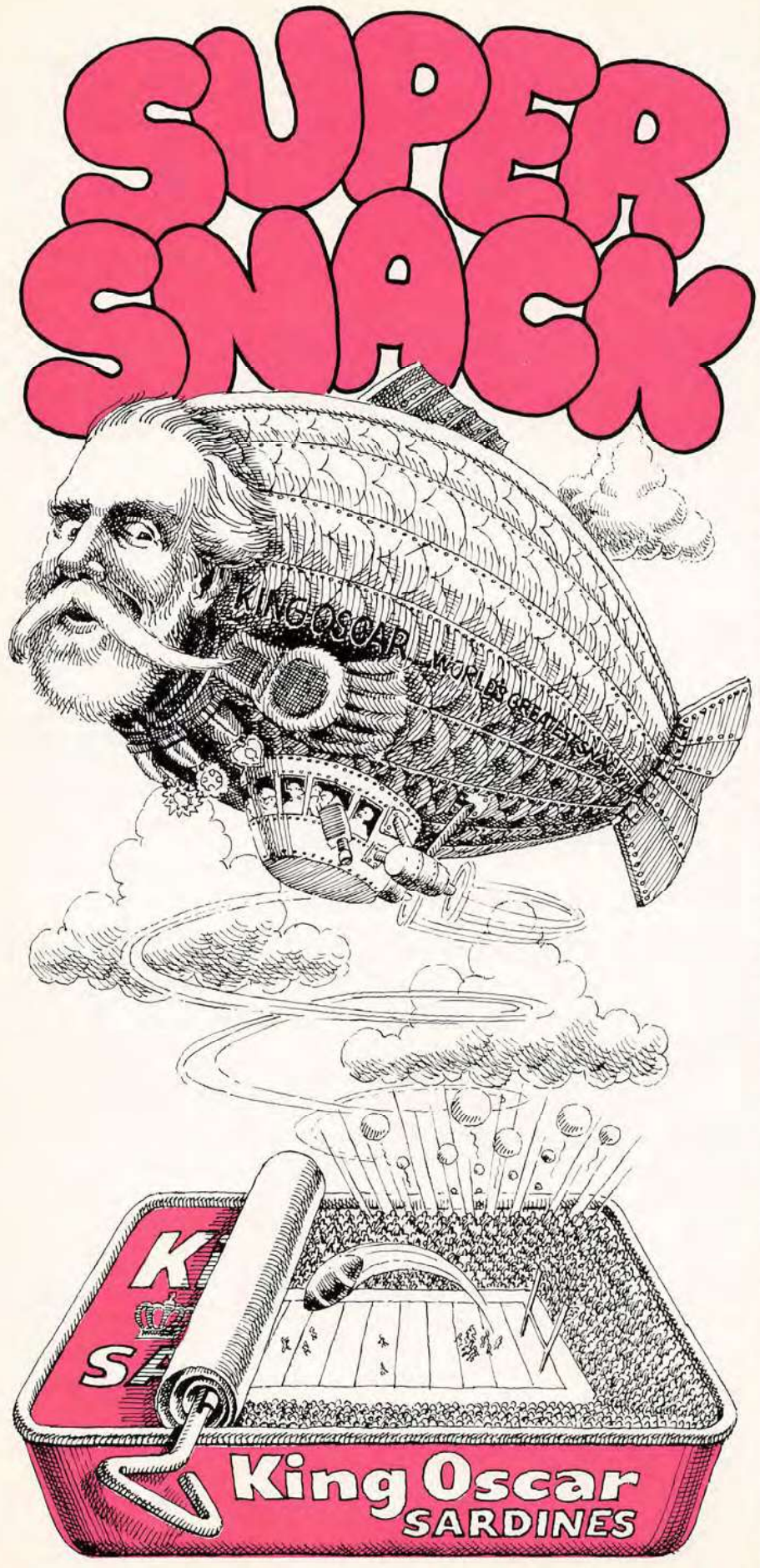

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GAME FACTS

At stake—The National Football League championship for the Vince Lombardi trophy.

Participants—The champions of the American Football Conference (AFC) and the National Football Conference (NFC) of the NFL.

Date—Sunday, January 15, 1978.

Starting time—Kickoff at 5:00 p.m., CST.

Site—The Superdome, New Orleans, Louisiana.

Capacity—76,791.

Playing surface—AstroTurf.

Players' shares—$18,000 to each member of the winning team and $9,000 to each member of the losing team; approximately $1.6 million total for the personnel of the competing clubs.

Player uniforms—The AFC champion will be the home team, will wear colored jerseys, and will use the west bench. The NFC champion will be the visiting team, will wear white jerseys, and will use the east bench.

Television—Columbia Broadcasting System.

Radio—CBS.

Officials—There will be six officials—referee, umpire, line judge, head linesman, back judge, and field judge—and two alternates.

Ball—The football used in all NFL games is a Wilson.

Official time—The scoreboard clock will be official.

Sudden death—If the game is tied at the end of regulation 60 minutes, it will continue in sudden death overtime. The team scoring first—by safety, field goal, or touchdown—will win. NFL preseason and regular season games have a maximum of one 15-minute overtime period but in postseason games play continues by 15-minute periods with a 2-minute intermission between each, until there is a winner.

Trophy—The winning team receives permanent possession of the Vince Lombardi trophy, a sterling silver trophy created by Tiffany & Company and presented annually to the winner of the Super Bowl.

Attendance history—A total of 880,356 persons have attended Super Bowl games. The largest crowd was the 103,438 at Super Bowl XI in Pasadena.

Game history—Super Bowl XII is the twelfth game in a series that began with Green Bay of the NFL defeating Kansas City of the AFL 35–10 in the Los Angeles Memorial Coliseum on January 15, 1967. Green Bay won Super Bowl II by defeating Oakland of the AFL 33–14 in Miami's Orange Bowl on January 14, 1968, in Vince Lombardi's last game as Green Bay coach.

AFL teams won Super Bowls III and IV, the New York Jets defeating Baltimore 16–7 on January 12, 1969 in Miami and Kansas City defeating Minnesota 23–7 on January 11, 1970 at Tulane Stadium in New Orleans.

The 1970 season brought a realigned NFL in which Baltimore of the American Football Conference defeated Dallas of the National Football Conference 16–13 at Miami on January 17, 1971 in Super Bowl V. The NFC Dallas Cowboys scored a 24–3 victory over the AFC Miami Dolphins in Super Bowl VI, played in New Orleans on January 16, 1972.

Don Shula's Miami Dolphins duplicated Green Bay's feat of winning successive championships by defeating Washington 14–7 in Super Bowl VII on January 14, 1973 in Los Angeles, and then winning over Minnesota 24–7 in Super Bowl VIII on January 13, 1974 in Houston.

Pittsburgh won a fourth consecutive Super Bowl for the AFC by putting together back-to-back victories, defeating Minnesota 16–6 in game IX played on January 12, 1975 in New Orleans and Dallas 21–17 in game X played in Miami on January 18, 1976. Coach Chuck Noll of the Steelers joined Lombardi and Shula as a two-time winner of the Super Bowl.

After several near-misses at the conference championship and nine years of waiting for a second chance, the AFC champion Oakland Raiders defeated Minnesota 32–14 in game XI, held in Pasadena's Rose Bowl on January 9, 1977.

Next game—Super Bowl XIII will be played January 21, 1979 at the Orange Bowl in Miami.

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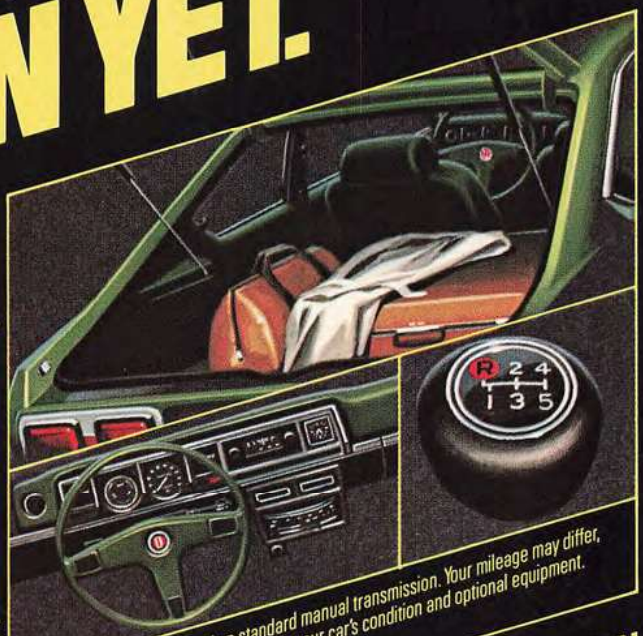

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SUPER BOWL CHAMPIONS

TEN-YEAR HISTORY OF PRO FOOTBALL'S BIGGEST GAME

Vernon Biever

Bart Starr, Green Bay, Super Bowl I

David Boss

Ken Stabler, Oakland, Super Bowl XI.

Super Bowl I Jan. 15, 1967 Green Bay 35, Kansas City 10 Los Angeles, 61,946
Vince Lombardi carried the NFL's banner and his Green Bay Packers swept over the Kansas City Chiefs of the American Football League. The two leagues had agreed to a merger 221 days before. This was the "First AFL-NFL World Championship Game"; official use of the term "Super Bowl" was still two years away.

Super Bowl II Jan. 14, 1968 Green Bay 33, Oakland 14 Miami, 75,546
The Packers won again in Lombardi's last game as their head coach. The Oakland Raiders represented the AFL in the Raiders' only appearance to date in the Super Bowl game. Herb Adderley's 60-yard touchdown run with an interception was one of the key plays of the game. The Packers "won it for the Old Man"; Lombardi retired later as Green Bay coach.

Super Bowl III Jan. 12, 1969 N.Y. Jets 16, Baltimore 7 Miami, 75,389
At a sports dinner at Miami Springs Villa three days before the game quarterback Joe Namath of the New York Jets said, "We are going to win on Sunday. I guarantee you." Namath made his boast reality when he led the Jets past the Baltimore Colts. The Jets became the first AFL team to win a Super Bowl and made professional football history.

Super Bowl IV Jan. 11, 1970 Kansas City 23, Minnesota 7 New Orleans, 80,562
An AFL team prevailed again in the last year for that league before it became the American Football Conference, half a realigned NFL. The Kansas City Chiefs avenged their Super Bowl I defeat, overcoming the Minnesota Vikings. The Chiefs were led by coach Hank Stram and quarterback Len Dawson. Both teams were products of pro football expansion in the sixties.

Super Bowl V Jan. 17, 1971 Baltimore 16, Dallas 13 Miami, 79,204
An American Football Conference team won the Super Bowl again. The victorious Baltimore Colts had been one of the three old NFL teams to move to the AFC. They defeated the Dallas Cowboys when Jim O'Brien kicked a 32-yard field goal on the last play of the game. The late Don McCafferty coached the Colts to their victory.

Super Bowl VI Jan. 16, 1972 Dallas 24, Miami 3 New Orleans, 81,023
Long before, the Dallas Cowboys had lost NFL championship games to the Green Bay Packers, thus narrowly missing Super Bowls I and II. And they had lost game V. Were they doomed to be "next year's champions"? They proved it wasn't so by crushing the Miami Dolphins. Dallas runners gained 252 yards. Coach Tom Landry and the Cowboys were champions of pro football.

Super Bowl VII Jan. 14, 1973 Miami 14, Washington 7 Los Angeles, 90,182
Don Shula had been the coach of the losing Colts in Super Bowl III and of the losing Dolphins in game VI. His Miami team triumphed over the Redskins, however, and the victory climaxed one of the greatest achievements in pro football history; the Dolphins went through the 1972 season undefeated, 17-0. George Allen led the Redskins, NFC champions the first time in 30 years.

Super Bowl VIII Jan. 13, 1974 Miami 24, Minnesota 7 Houston, 71,882
The Miami Dolphins became the first team since the Packers of Lombardi to win successive Super Bowls. Shula, their coach, completed a coaching miracle. He had taken over a losing Dolphins' team just five seasons before. Dolphins' fullback Larry Csonka powered through Minnesota for 145 yards. The Vikings lost in the Super Bowl for a second time.

Super Bowl IX Jan. 12, 1975 Pittsburgh 16, Minnesota 6 New Orleans, 80,997
The Pittsburgh Steelers defeated Minnesota and Steelers' coach Chuck Noll had achieved a miracle to rival Shula's; the Steelers had been 1-13 when Noll coached them for the first time in 1969. Now they were Super Bowl champions. Their great defense overwhelmed Minnesota and running back Franco Harris gained 158 yards, breaking Csonka's Super Bowl record.

Super Bowl X Jan. 18, 1976 Pittsburgh 21, Dallas 17 Miami, 80,187
The Steelers joined the Packers and Dolphins as two-time Super Bowl champions and Noll joined Lombardi and Shula as the only coaches to have achieved that honor. Lynn Swann of Pittsburgh caught four passes for a Super Bowl record 161 yards, including a 64-yard bomb from Terry Bradshaw, and the Steelers' defense sacked the Cowboys' Roger Staubach seven times.

Super Bowl XI Jan. 9, 1977 Oakland 32, Minnesota 14 Pasadena, 103,438
A record Super Bowl crowd watched the Oakland Raiders, coached by John Madden, post a convincing victory for their first NFL championship. Wide receiver Fred Biletnikoff made four key catches leading the Raiders to a record 429 yards total offense, and cornerback Willie Brown returned an intercepted pass 75 yards for a touchdown.

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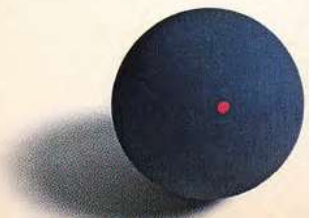

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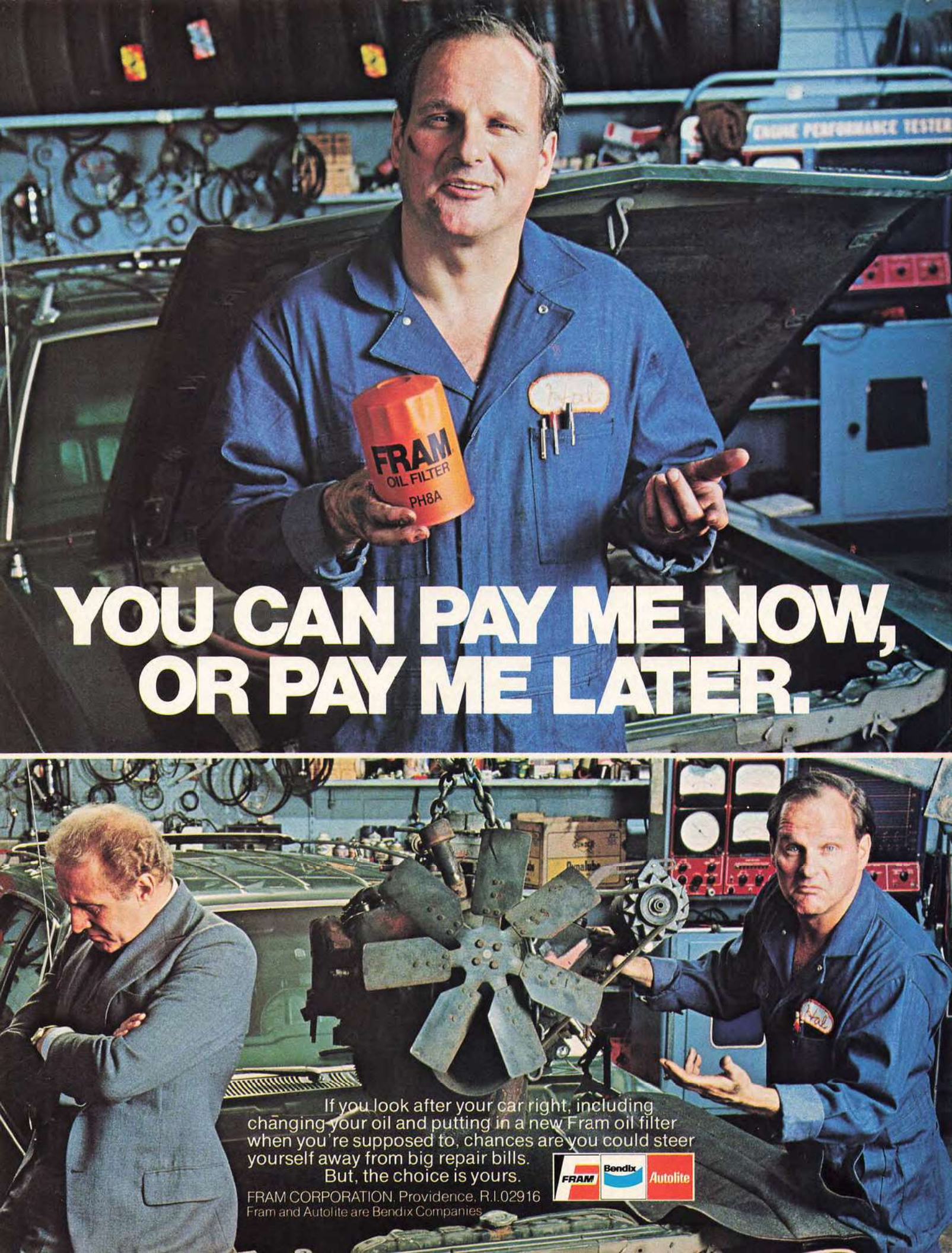
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Theme art? Look at the cover of this program. That's theme art. It's also on the game tickets, media guide covers, posters, patches, and numerous other items.

In the past, the art has been assigned and, ultimately, delivered. It's always been a rather routine event . . . until this year.

David Boss, publisher of the Creative Services Division of National Football League Properties, Inc., commissioned Donald Moss to do the painting for Super Bowl XII. Moss was given three basic instructions: capture the atmosphere and feeling of New Orleans, include the Louisiana Superdome, and feature the Vince Lombardi trophy as the predominant symbol of the NFL's biggest single game.

Moss began work on the project in November 1976 and finished six months later. It was a Friday afternoon in May when he delivered his creation to the New York offices of NFLP.

Bob Carey, NFLP president, received the materials. It's at this point that the story takes a strange twist.

After examining the illustration, Carey had it packed for shipment to Boss in Los Angeles, where Creative Services is located. A receptionist called an airfreight service for a pickup.

Around two o'clock that afternoon, a casually dressed young man entered the Properties office and asked, "Do you have a pickup here?"

"Are you from the air service?" replied the receptionist.

"Yes," he said. He was given the package.

About 40 minutes later, a man in an airfreight uniform showed up. "I have a pickup here for delivery to Los Angeles," he said.

The receptionist, a part-time employee, told him the package already had been picked up. He said he didn't see how that was possible. The receptionist called Carey with the information.

Carey immediately phoned the airfreight office. They suggested Carey call a service in New York that had a person fitting the description of the mystery messenger.

Carey had no luck solving the crisis. "I assumed the art was lost," he said.

Carey placed a call to Boss and told him the news. Then he and Bernie Koehler, NFLP's treasurer, scoured a four-block radius around the NFLP office building on Park Avenue, checking every trash can in sight. Their mission was fruitless.

Donald Moss

George Gaadt

Boss, meanwhile, had the unenviable task of telling Moss what had happened.

It was particularly distressing news for Moss. During his original work, he had sent Boss several rough tissues, each bringing a slightly different perspective. "They just didn't do it," said Boss.

A second series of sketches were improvements, but they still were off the mark.

"The hardest thing about the theme art is that the teams involved cannot be shown since they aren't known until two weeks before the event," explained Boss. "To attempt to show football players in nondescript uniforms doesn't work. And trying to combine the three requested elements was creating a headache for him. He was becoming discouraged."

A meeting in New York in March proved to be the solution. "His adrenalin began to flow," said Boss. "Soon after, he came up with the sketch that was the genesis of the theme art."

Moss sent it to Boss along with the following note: "The enclosed is my last shot. In twenty years, I can't recall such weeks of fruitless frustration."

Later came the tale of woe from Boss.

"I almost had a stroke," related the 57-year-old Moss, who has done covers for *Time* and *Sports Illustrated* and who currently is painting a series of stamps for the 1980 Olympics in Moscow.

"Don was severely depressed and said there was no way he could go through it again," Boss said. "The only other solution was to create an entirely new theme painting—an unthinkable solution at such a late date."

The weekend passed without a sign of the package.

Monday morning around 10 o'clock, Bob Bell, vice-president of marketing for NFLP, received a phone call in New York.

On the line was a staff member from the United States Air Force Information Bureau office on Fifth Avenue.

"Are you missing a package?" asked the Air Force representative.

Knowing of the missing package, Bell said yes.

"We'd like for you to come over and pick it up," said the caller, "because it's tied to a governmental investigation."

Bell went to the Department of Defense office and was met by two men from the Central Investigation Department, which handles internal security problems. They gave him the package. Inside was Donald Moss's Super Bowl theme art.

It had been found in a men's room by J. Raymond Quinn, who works for the Air Force public information office. The mailing label on the front of the package offered a clue to the owner.

The bogus messenger had talked his way into the Department of Defense office using the package as an entree. He had discarded his parcel, broken into a room, and stolen two valuable cameras. The governmental investigation concerned the missing cameras.

There still are a few unanswered questions. Who was the delivery man? How did he know there was a package at NFL Properties? Why did it end up in a men's room in a building on Fifth Avenue?

But the happy ending is that the painting reached its intended audience.

George Gaadt, a commercial artist who lives in the Pittsburgh suburb of Sewicky, has no stories to match the harrowing tale of Moss's illustration. His portfolio on "Super Men," which begins on page 37, reached NFL Properties without any problems.

Gaadt has been a regular contributor to *PRO!*, the official magazine of the NFL. His work appears in the Super Bowl program for the first time.

"I've always enjoyed sports," he explains. "In any assignment I try to find out as much as I can about the subject. A lot of information makes the job easier to complete."

He has plenty of material—much of it personal—on Fred Biletnikoff, the most valuable player last year. Gaadt was an end at Erie, Pennsylvania, High School when Biletnikoff was the quarterback.

"I've followed Fred's career through the years," says Gaadt. "Knowing him helped make that assignment easier than some of the others I've done."

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OPEN FORUM: PETER FINNEY

Illustrations by Chuck Ren

Biblically speaking, Tulane football begat the Sugar Bowl. The Sugar Bowl begat an 80,000-seat stadium. An 80,000-seat stadium begat the Saints. The Saints begat the Superdome. And the Superdome today begets the first indoor Super Bowl.

Red Grange will be honored, which is appropriate, since it was Grange who applied the initial stroke to the ongoing, 52-year-old mural depicting the journey of pro football in New Orleans.

Grange was responsible for the first professional game played in the city—January 10, 1926—a time when university folks looked on pro football as something approaching the plague.

Several members of the Southern All-Stars, a crazy quilt squad of 17 assembled to play an exhibition against Grange's touring Chicago Bears, had just finished their Tulane careers under Clark Shaughnessy, whose 9–1 club in 1925 helped pioneer the coach's revolutionary three-receiver concept (split end, flanker, tight end) in a single wing attack.

Although the players were conscious of the dim view colleges took of the pros, they could not have anticipated the opposition they encountered. Tulane refused to permit its facilities to be used for practice and it informed Alfred (Brother) Brown, a former star running back then an assistant coach, he would lose his job if he suited up against the likes of Grange and George Halas, the Bears' coach and a starting end.

The All-Stars found a practice site in the city's Irish Channel section, Loyola University provided the uniforms, and the All-Stars, who were composed of players from Tulane, LSU, Loyola, Auburn, and Vanderbilt, went into battle with three plays—an end run, a center buck, and a forward pass, to either side.

Meanwhile, the arrival of Grange was a page one sensation in New Orleans.

A crowd of 6,700, paying $2, $3, and $5, filled Heinemann Park, home of the baseball Pelicans, to make January 10, 1926 a $21,000 payday for the pros. The rag-tag collegians put up a fight before losing 14–0. Grange played 50 minutes, carrying 17 times for a four-yard average, but it was Brother Brown who had the game's longest run, 36 yards. Tulane was not dissuaded; Brother Brown was fired.

Nine years later, Tulane launched a game that eventually would provide the means to bring pro football back to the city—on a permanent basis. The Green Wave whipped Pop Warner-coached Temple in the first Sugar Bowl before a crowd of 24,000, which was all Tulane Stadium could handle. Despite the tight-money days of the thirties, the early games were such a success as a tourist attraction that the Sugar Bowl quickly became a New Year's Day fixture, triggering a three-phase expansion of Tulane Stadium from a modest concrete structure into the world's largest steel-constructed stadium, with a seating capacity of 80,985.

Red Grange had no qualms about turning pro.

A showcase for campus heroes soon to become salaried hands in the NFL, the Sugar Bowl produced a galaxy that included Sammy Baugh (1936), Davey O'Brien (1939) and Ki Aldrich (1939) of TCU, Charley Trippi (1947) of Georgia, Harry Gilmer (1945 and 1948) of Alabama, Bobby Layne (1948) of Texas, Babe Parilli (1951) of Kentucky, Dick Modzelewski (1952) of Maryland, Sam Huff (1954) of West Virginia, Del Shofner (1957) of Baylor, Billy Cannon (1959 and 1960) of LSU, Ken Stabler (1967) of Alabama, Archie Manning (1970) of Mississippi, Richard Todd (1975) of Alabama, and Tony Dorsett (1977) of Pittsburgh.

Baugh, Trippi, and Layne pushed on from Sugar Bowl victories to an alcove in Canton, Ohio, called the Pro Football Hall of Fame. More than 40 years later, Baugh's performance in the second Sugar Bowl remains a classic. Playing at a time when leather helmets, woolen jerseys, and awkward padding added as much as 20 pounds to a player's weight, it's a shame the 180-pound Baugh didn't weigh in after TCU edged LSU 3–2.

Baugh finished 60 minutes of football in mud-caked splendor. Throughout much of the game, rain came down in drops the size of two-bit pieces, transforming Slingin' Sam into Puntin' Sam and Tacklin' Sam. He completed only two of seven passes. But he punted the ball 14 times for a 48-yard average, once kicking out on the LSU 44 while standing in his end zone. He made seven solo tackles from his safety position, two of them preventing touchdowns. He also held the ball on the game-winning 36-yard field goal.

Baugh went on to become a star for 16 years in the NFL with the Washington Redskins. Oddly enough, his quarterback successor in Washington was another southerner who had played in the Sugar Bowl as freshman and senior. Harry Gilmer was 0–2, losing the second game in 1948 to Texas, which had Layne at quarterback and Tom Landry at defensive back. *(Continued)*

Front row: Manning, Baugh, Cannon; Back row: O'Brien, Layne, Dorsett.

In 1945, as an 18-year-old freshman, Gilmer was spectacular in defeat, part of a remarkable civilian team Frank Thomas put together with a flock of 4-Fs. Only four Alabama players had any college experience. Still, they fought heavily favored Duke to the wire, losing 29–26 in the wildest Sugar Bowl ever. Gilmer seemed to spend the afternoon levitating. He couldn't keep his feet on the ground. On a dead run to his right, he'd leap and send a spiral 40 yards downfield into a red jersey. After Duke went ahead in the final minute, Gilmer marched Alabama to the Duke 24, his last completion a leaping 30-yarder to a receiver who could not get past one last defender. New York Giants coach Steve Owen was in the stands. "Gilmer is the only player I've ever seen who can throw the football so well completely off balance," said Owen.

With prewar, wartime, and postwar drama of this kind, stadium expansion was relatively easy to sell. By the time the city began flirting with the NFL, the Sugar Bowl had successfully engineered $1.5 million in bond issues to add 57,000 seats to the stadium and present pro football with an 80,000-seat facility.

Once visionary-promoter Dave Dixon sold Tulane's Board of Administrators on abolishing a Sunday law (up to the birth of the Saints in 1967, Sunday football was prohibited), the major roadblock had been cleared. Lester Lautenschlaeger, an influential member of the board and a quarterback at Tulane under Shaughnessy in 1925, was the man who had organized the Southern All-Stars who faced Grange and the Bears.

New Orleans embraced its new team with overwhelming warmth. In their first season, the Saints averaged 75,000 at home and, even though 5–9 was the best they could do during eight years in Tulane Stadium, the average never fell below 64,000. In the Superdome, crowds dipped into the 40,000s but the hard-core remains faithfully committed to the young team.

Highlights over an 11-year stretch include a 93-yard return by John Gilliam against the Rams on the first regular season kickoff, a record 63-yard field goal by Tom Dempsey against the Lions, and the movie *Number One* starring Charlton Heston as a Saints' quarterback. The movie proved Heston could drive a chariot better than he could throw a football, possibly because he had Billy Kilmer as a teacher.

Without the Saints' success at the box office, there would have been no chemistry to erect the world's largest air-conditioned playpen. The Superdome is a creature of the sports boom of the sixties and, in a deeper sense, of a city's unparalleled sports heritage.

It was here that fencing was introduced to America, Count Bernard Mandeville introduced dice, and baseball's rain check and Ladies' Day originated. It was here that Corbett kayoed Sullivan in the first heavyweight championship fight fought with gloves.

Before it landed on the franchise map, New Orleans retained an interest in fun and games that can be traced to barroom conviviality, the carefree tradition of a onetime riverboat mecca. When you add up the neighborhood watering holes, the lounges, the hotels, and French Quarter oases, they number more than 3,000. A heritage that includes the oldest tennis club in America, the second oldest yacht club, the third oldest race track, has been kept alive over scotch, bourbon, and schooners of beer.

Today's game will be played over land first known as "The Swamp." Until the Superdome became a reality, the area's main claim to fame was King Zulu, who once rode the royal barge down the New Basin Canal, embarking at what is now the fringe of the dome complex. Also at one time, the area was a maze of railroad tracks, some of them serving the Girod-Poydras mule-driven streetcar line, whose route traversed territory now covered by artificial turf. Trips were so bumpy passengers never knew whether their car was on the tracks or riding the cobblestones. For many, G-P stood for "get out and push."

Time marches on. Because Dave Dixon found willing political muscle in John McKeithen, a governor who doubled as a sports fanatic, you now have a complex weighing 300,000 tons supported by an underground forest of more than 3,000 pilings, each one 160 feet long and 10 inches in diameter.

They were driven through the earth's crust to support "tomorrow."

Yesterday, in the three Super Bowls in Tulane Stadium, the teams had the problem of keeping warm, the Chiefs and Vikings in IV, the Cowboys and Dolphins in VI, the Steelers and Vikings in IX.

Today, that's one less problem, not to mention the one less worry facing the captains at the coin toss. Which is who gets the wind in the fourth quarter? ❗

Peter Finney is sports editor of the New Orleans States-Item.

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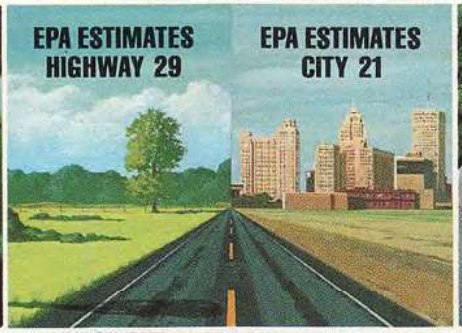

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INSIGHT

A BEFORE N

By Bill McGrane

It hardly seems possible.

It hardly seems possible, that is, if you happened to have cut your pro football teeth in places such as Chicago or Detroit or Philadelphia or Washington.

Those are National Football Conference places.

They used to be called National Football League places and let it go at that.

Never mind that second tier of places that constituted a fluffy little comic opera we knew as the American Football League.

Life seemed so well-ordered then.

Sunday mornings, a man might attend the church of his choice and dawdle over waffles and a sports page that treated the day's upcoming NFL games with the solemnity once used to chronicle Montgomery's scrapes with Rommel on the North African desert. Somewhere, back between the snow tire ads, those sport pages would provide sparse, un-bylined little roundup pieces on the AFL games to be played on that particular Sunday.

Then a man might kill the rest of the morning raking leaves or trimming hedges or taking that fine fall air in a stroll with his dog. But only until noontime. At noontime, a man began serious preparations for the NFL hours that lay just ahead.

Television picture adjusted; easy chair and hassock adjusted to the perfect angle; drapes drawn against the sun's glare; snacks and the rosters from the sports page close at hand. And then three hours of what Sunday was all about...

And afterwards, if supper was still an hour away or the wife had taken the kids to her mother's... and because it was a little bit like watching the Marx Brothers and wondering what in hell they'd think of next...

Well, then you'd relax and flip channels to NBC and there they'd be! They'd always come with a late game it seemed, hopeful of catching people just like you ... curiosity-seekers looking for a laugh after the gravity of the three-hour Argonne they'd just seen on CBS.

There'd be Gowdy and Christman enthusing about guys named Tolar and Kemp and Gilchrist and Kocourek. To the practiced NFL eye it seemed like they had four kinds of players in the AFL: skinny, fat, short, and unknown.

It seemed like every other game was coming to you, live, from Balboa Stadium. And by the fourth quarter (which was usually when you started watching), the seagulls and fans numbered about

Don Weller

even with the players on the field.

If a team didn't have 30 points by the start of the fourth quarter in those games, they'd better figure on losing. Hell, nobody took it seriously until the fourth quarter! That's when guys like Hennigan and Powell and Haynes and some bird named Songin got busy. Used to make you wonder where the defensive backs had gone to, those fourth quarters did.

Throw the damned ball! Man, they'd throw a pass off a double reverse... from inside their own 20!

Seemed that way, anyhow. And, like we said, it was a great way to relax after watching real football.

But then strange things started happening.

Some remote rich guy named Hunt and some mysterious guy named Davis started getting their names in the paper, and not back by the snow tire ads, either.

All of a sudden Davis was the commissioner of this AFL, replacing Joe Foss on April 8, 1966. For just two months. Because on June 8, 1966 the established NFL and the authors of all those late-Sunday afternoon pratfalls, the AFL, began a merger.

One of the more amusing articles of this alliance was a championship game to be played between the American and National Conferences.

A world championship game.

For a couple of years, those AFL guys had been wondering out loud when they'd get a crack at the NFL champions. Naturally, those of us in NFL citadels equated that kind of talk with the sound a man can make by rattling a stick around in an empty rain barrel.

But they asked for it... begged for it.

And they got it, two years running, from the late Vince Lombardi and that fearsome green machine he'd assembled up on the Fox River. Green Bay stampeded Kansas City 35–10 in Super Bowl I and then dismantled Oakland 33–14 in Super Bowl II. Purists, propped in front of their televisions, yawned. The Packers' players did their best to think up postgame comments that wouldn't add to the embarrassment.

Since Vince Lombardi and the Packers cuffed around those upstart Chiefs and Raiders, nine Super Bowls have been played.

And eight of them have been won by those come-lately devils from the American Football Conference. Only the Dallas Cowboys, 24–3 winners over Miami in Super Bowl VI, have intervened these past nine years.

We have endured Joe Willie Namath and Matt Snell. We have bowed to Henry Stram's hoisted program and Willie Lanier's shattering tackles. Jim O'Brien beat us with a field goal and seemed to jump about 14 feet in the air after the ref's arms came up. Then we got double-doses of Miami and Pittsburgh. First it was Zonk and Kiick, etc. Then it was Franco and a defensive line that would give you nightmares. Then Stabler and Sistrunk and the tacky-torsoed Biletnikoff.

Nine years, now.

A before N... but only after V.

Hey, Vince, we're sorry. We don't like it either.

But maybe today....!

SIDELIGHTS

ASHLEY WHIPPET, A CANINE SUPERSTAR

Pat Summerall

Tom Brookshier

Ashley Whippet

Ashley Whippet has played the White House, Rose Bowl, Astrodome, Orange Bowl, Disneyland, Central Park, Six Flags Over Georgia, Playfair Race Track in Spokane, Arlington Park Race Track in Chicago, the MGM Grand Hotel in Las Vegas, the "Tonight Show," the "Gong Show," and the "Mike Douglas Show." He's been featured in *People* magazine.

It's an impressive list of credits, especially for someone six years old. It's even more impressive because Ashley Whippet is a dog—the world's greatest frisbee-catching canine. He won the honor for the third straight year last August.

Today's pregame entertainment will feature a display of the abilities of both Whippet, who is owned and trained by Alex Stein, and Hyper Hank, an Australian Shepherd who is owned and trained by Eldon McIntire. Hank was runner-up to Whippet in the world championships.

The dogs are but a portion of the entertainment for Super Bowl XII. Also on the pregame program are the 170-member Southern University Marching Band and the finals of the Ford Punt, Pass, and Kick competition.

Southern University is making its second appearance in the Super Bowl. (The first was at game V in Miami.) The Jaguars, directed by Dr. Isaac Greggs, have been officially proclaimed Louisiana's "Ambassadors of Good Will."

Punt, Pass, and Kick is sponsored by the NFL and the Ford Dealers of America and is in its seventeenth year. Youngsters between the ages of 8 and 13 are eligible to enter. Today's participants have advanced through local, zone, district, area, and division competition to reach the national finals.

The halftime show will include Tyler Junior College's marching band, the Apache Belles, and Harmony and Understanding, a musical group of 24 students.

The theme of the show will be "From Paris to the Paris of America" and is set in an appropriate French motif. The band, Apache Belles, and singers will be attired in French costumes. Pete Fountain also will appear.

Red Grange, a charter member of the Pro Football Hall of Fame, will toss the coin before Super Bowl XII.

He will use the commemorative medal from Super Bowl V, when Baltimore defeated Dallas 16–13 on Jim O'Brien's 32-yard field goal with five seconds left to play.

The NFL has commissioned Mint-America to manufacture the silver medals, which commemorate Super Bowls I through XI. The coin Grange will toss depicts O'Brien's winning kick.

"Isn't this fantastic?" Miami coach Don Shula asked the first time he was in the mammoth Louisiana Superdome. "How could you ever build anything better?"

The subject of Shula's amazements sits on 52 acres in downtown New Orleans on Poydras Street, just off Interstate 10. It is 273 feet high and the dome, which is 680 feet in diameter, has an area of 9.7 acres, a size comparable to seven football fields.

Inside, where the seating capacity for Super Bowl XII is 75,975, there are four scoreboards, each 8 feet by 88 feet, a six-sided Superscreen TV, 50 meeting rooms, and 64 private box suites. Nine-thousand tons of air conditioning are needed to cool the 125 million cubic yards of interior space.

Super Bowl XII is for the whole world to see and hear.

CBS is televising the game live in the United States (221 stations), Canada (378 stations, including 70 French language outlets), Puerto Rico, Mexico, Japan, and the British Isles. Servicemen overseas will see the game through the facilities of the American Forces Television. Video tape and film will be shown on a delayed basis in 30 other countries. Pat Summerall and Tom Brookshier are providing the commentary for the telecast, which is produced by Bob Stenner and directed by Tony Verna.

A special 90-minute edition of "NFL Today" precedes the game coverage. Brent Musburger, Phyllis George, Irv Cross, and Jimmy (The Greek) Snyder are hosts. In addition to setting the scene for the game broadcast, the program will cover the excitement of being at Super Bowl on a Sunday in New Orleans.

Six mobile units and the permanent television facilities in the Superdome serve as the nerve center of the broadcast. CBS will employ 22 cameras in their coverage.

The postgame show originates from both locker rooms and the "NFL Today" studios in the Superdome's Stadium Club. Sonny Jurgensen, Paul Hornung, and Johnny Unitas will interview the game's key participants.

The CBS Radio Network is broadcasting Super Bowl XII in the United States and around the world on the American Forces Radio Network. Jack Buck will do play-by-play with commentary and analysis from Jurgensen and Jim Kelly.

"I think it's important that we take care of ourselves. That's why doctors have advised millions of caffein-concerned Americans, like me, to drink delicious SANKA® BRAND *Decaffeinated Coffee."*

—Robert Young

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SUPER BOWL RINGS

SYMBOLS OF CHAMPIONS

Photographs by Stan Caplan

Throughout history a great deal of meaning has been attached to rings. They have been worn to symbolize wealth, power, privilege, and achievement.

In the NFL, the ultimate achievement is winning the Super Bowl and the individual members of the world championship organization earn the right to wear a unique ring as an instantly recognizable mark of their success.

The rings are unique for several reasons. Each Super Bowl champion is allowed to design its own, subject to guidelines—including costs—set by the NFL clubs.

They are produced in a very limited quantity—approximately 75 per club—and they are generally given only to the players, coaches, staff aides, and members of the front office staff.

Three manufacturers have supplied the 11 Super Bowl rings. Josten's of Minneapolis, Minnesota, has designed seven; L. G. Balfour of Attleboro, Massachusetts, has done three, and the Oakland Raiders commissioned Lenox Awards, Inc. of St. Charles, Illinois, to design theirs after Super Bowl XI.

The companies' chief designers—Ken Westerland of Josten's, Norman Shorrock of Balfour, and Elliott Inberg of Lenox—worked closely with the clubs.

After Super Bowl I, Vince Lombardi was eager to have the rings as early as possible. Westerland flew to Green Bay with his sketches and met with the coach and Packers' cocaptains Bob Skoronski and Willie Davis. Lombardi liked some of the sketches but he had ideas of his own. Westerland then went to the art department of a Green Bay television station, borrowed a friend's airbrush, and spent the entire night rendering the new design. "Usually sketches require a period of two or three weeks, at best," says Westerland, "but Mr. Lombardi was in a hurry, so we did our best to accommodate him."

Inberg, who has worked for Lenox for 12 years, says that designing the Raiders' ring was "by far, the most interesting job I've had to do." He submitted several different designs to Al Davis, the Raiders' managing general partner.

"Al had something very specific in mind and one of my designs came very close to matching it," Inberg says. "He wanted something with a lot of diamonds that wasn't traditional looking."

After his second meeting with Davis in Oakland, Inberg stayed up all night making revisions on a design. Two subsequent meetings were held to make minor changes.

Since Super Bowl IV, all clubs have had the same amount of money to spend, which sets their creative minds to work in an attempt to realize the greatest value for the dollars available.

All of the rings feature diamonds of one size or another and a variety of synthetic and natural stones that complement the colors of the team. The ring is solid gold, usually 10 karat because it is harder and more resistant to wear. Some of the rings have been 14 karat.

Marv Fleming owns the most Super Bowl rings (four) and has played in the most Super Bowl games (five). A tight end at Green Bay during their wins in Super Bowls I and II, he was traded to Miami just as the Dolphins began their reign as the AFC's dominant team and played on the winners of games VII and VIII. Herb Adderley, a former teammate of Fleming at Green Bay who finished his career at Dallas, has rings from games I, II, and VI. Quarterback Earl Morrall also has three rings—for games V (Baltimore) and VII and VIII (Miami).

Game I Green Bay Packers
Josten's

Vince Lombardi and his two captains, tackle Bob Skoronski and defensive end Willie Davis, worked with Ken Westerland to design the ring that commemorates the Super Bowl I championship. It is 10k gold and features a one-karat diamond inset in a white gold hemispheric globe. In 1967, gold cost about $32 an ounce. That price has risen to about $160 an ounce today. On one side of the shank, Westerland developed a detail from the Lombardi family coat of arms and combined it in a pattern with emblems of the AFL and NFL. The opposite shank features the scores of the 1966 NFL championship game and Super Bowl I. The ring weighs 23 pennyweight.

Game II Green Bay Packers
Josten's

Super Bowl II culminated Lombardi's coaching career with the Packers and he spared no effort in having a ring that exemplified his years of glory in Green Bay. Again, Josten's designed the ring, which is 10k gold and features one full-karat diamond and two half-karat diamonds set in a football-shaped tourmaline. The words "Challenge" and "Run to Win" are featured on one shank together with pennants flying from an outline of the NFL shield. On the other shank is a crown surmounted on a world globe. The rings cost $1,900 each in 1968. Recent appraisals have set the value at $3,500. It is the largest of all Super Bowl rings—"a real knuckle buster," says Westerland. It weighs 30 pennyweight.

Game III New York Jets
Balfour

Joe Namath had guaranteed the 16–7 win over Baltimore, so he was given the job of designing the Jets' Super Bowl ring with Balfour's Norman Shorrock. The Jets, who were the first Super Bowl champions from the American Football League, wanted a ring that eclipsed those of the already legendary Green Bay Packers. "Expense was no object with Joe," Shorrock said. The ring is 14k gold, featuring a 75-point diamond set in a football-shaped emerald spinel. Six smaller diamonds of approximately 20 points each surround the larger stone. The ring weighs 25 pennyweight and cost over $2,000 each in 1969. "When Weeb Ewbank heard the figure he couldn't believe it," said Shorrock.

Game IV Kansas City Chiefs
Josten's

The Chiefs, who defeated Minnesota 23–7 for the world championship, were the first team to use the Super Bowl trophy in their ring. Coach Hank Stram and general manager Jack Steadman commissioned Josten's to design a ring that symbolized the victory and acknowledged the club's tenth anniversary. The ring, which weighs 26 pennyweight, is 10k gold, featuring a full karat diamond surrounded by 10 smaller diamonds—ranging in size from three to five points—set in a white gold football-shaped crest. The crest is set into a glowing synthetic ruby. On one shank is the AFL seal surrounded by a crown. The other has the game's score above the Super Bowl trophy.

Game V Baltimore Colts
Josten's

General manager Don Klosterman supervised the design of the Colts' ring, working closely with Westerland. A white gold horseshoe surrounds a full karat diamond, which is set in an unusually large (16mm. wide by 14mm. high) fire blue spinel. Within the horseshoe are seven five-point blue sapphires, vapor-plated on the back to make them more luminous. On the left shank is each recipient's name, number, and position, the Colts' helmet, and the final score. The right shank has the year (1970), the Super Bowl trophy, and the inscription "Super Bowl V." The ring, which is made of 10k gold and weighs 26 pennyweight, is unique because of the complicated inverted bezel.

Game VI Dallas Cowboys
Balfour

Shorrock created a stunning ring to commemorate the Cowboys' 24–3 Super Bowl victory over the Miami Dolphins. It features a large synthetic star-shaped sapphire in which is centered an 80-point diamond. Between the points of the star are 15 other diamonds—three 10-point, two 5-point, and 10 one-half-point—creating a setting with a total of one-and-one-third carats. The ring is 14k white gold with deep-cut detailing. One shank features the Vince Lombardi trophy, the NFL shield, the year, and "Super Bowl VI." On the opposite shank are the Cowboys' helmet, the recipient's name, and in the case of the players, their numbers. It is the lightest of all Super Bowl rings: 21 pennyweight.

Game VII Miami Dolphins
Josten's

Managing general partner Joe Robbie and coach Don Shula wanted something special to commemorate Miami's perfect 17–0 season in 1972, which was capped by the 14–7 victory over Washington in the Super Bowl. The result was a 10k yellow gold ring with a one-karat diamond set in a 12mm. by 10mm. aquamarine. It has a unique double bevel bezel construction with 16 three-point diamonds on the inside bevel. On one shank is the raised name of the recipient over the Dolphins' logo with Shula's motto "Winning Edge" below. The other has the Vince Lombardi trophy surrounded by "Super Bowl VII," the score, "17–0," and "Perfect Season." The ring weighs 26 pennyweight.

Game VIII Miami Dolphins
Josten's

After the Dolphins' second consecutive Super Bowl victory, Robbie asked Josten's to create a similar but simpler ring. Westerland selected two 60-point diamonds, representative of the two world championships, and put them in an elliptical white gold mount, which was set in a large (16mm. by 14mm.) aquamarine stone. On one shank are the recipient's name, his number or title, and the Dolphins' logo, which is orange and aqua enamel. On the opposite shank are the scores from Super Bowls VII and VIII, the Vince Lombardi trophy, and the inscription "Back to Back." The ring is 10k yellow gold and weighs 24 pennyweight. Miami beat Minnesota 24–7 to earn the second ring.

Game IX Pittsburgh Steelers
Josten's

Westerland and Steelers' president Dan Rooney worked on the ring that commemorated the first NFL championship in the club's 42-year history. Rooney selected a complicated inverted double bevel bezel with a barrel shape that transforms in a cushion antique shape at the center. A one-karat diamond was set in a 12mm. by 10mm. cushion of antique genuine black onyx. All wording and emblems on the shanks of the ring, which is 10k white gold, are incised. On one shank are the recipient's name, number or title, and the Steelers' logo. The other side has the wording "Super Bowl IX," the Lombardi trophy, and scores of the playoff games and Super Bowl. The ring weighs 25 pennyweight.

Game X Pittsburgh Steelers
Balfour

For the Steelers' second straight world championship, Rooney worked with Shorrock to create what is perhaps the most unusual of all the Super Bowl rings to date. It is 14k yellow gold and features a complex cushion antique shape with dramatically raised wording. Two 50-point diamonds were set in paladium, a precious alloy of the platinum family. The paladium was sculpted to display the Vince Lombardi trophy on the face. The trophy is flanked on both sides by the diamonds. The shanks are incised in the same manner as the previous year. The ring weighs 23 pennyweight. On one side is the official seal from America's bicentennial celebration.

Game XI Oakland Raiders
Lenox Awards

The Raiders undertook an intense search for the design of their championship ring. Four companies submitted designs that were examined by managing general partner Al Davis, head coach John Madden, and executive assistant Al Locasale. Lenox Awards, Inc., a division of Lenox Company, the producers of china, was chosen to make the ring. Designer Elliott Inberg's creation is extremely complex. The ring is 14k white gold, set with 27 diamonds in and around a black spinel onyx center, and weighs an average of 31 pennyweight. Included on the shanks are the Raiders' emblem, scores from the AFC championship game and the Super Bowl, and the recipient's name.

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"It happens every Saturday.

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Actually, we're pretty good at it. In fact, sometimes our games really get rough.

Especially for me. (The kids love to tackle me every chance they get.)

That's why I make sure I'm wearing jeans that can take it. Jeans that are tough because they have a Talon 42® metal zipper in them.

When the gang piles up on me, I know that Talon 42 is strong enough to take the strain.

Which means a Saturday morning quarterback like me can run, pass and block with confidence.

Of course, in this league, that's no great advantage.

Because in my family, everyone insists on a Talon 42 metal zipper in their jeans, too."

The Talon 42 metal zipper says a lot about the jeans it's in.

Talon TEXTRON

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DISNEY EXTRAVAGANZA

SUPER BOWL XI HALFTIME

Photograph by Herb Weitman

A record crowd of 103,438 attended Super Bowl XI and transformed the Rose Bowl in Pasadena, California, into a kaleidoscope of brilliant color during a spectacular halftime card stunt.

Walt Disney Productions produced the gala show, which conveyed peace, joy, and love in the theme of "It's a Small World." In addition to the spectators in the stands, Disney used nearly 2,000 on-field participants.

Individual four-color cards with instructions for their use were distributed during the first half. The card stunts were directed by 28 yell leaders and 56 song leaders on the field. Special instructions were transmitted via the stadium's two electric scoreboards.

The finale (below) bathed the Rose Bowl in a sea of color—red, white, blue, green, yellow, orange, and violet. In the center of the field was a globe surrounded by 156 students representing each nation of the world.

Just Super!

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LAGER BEER
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GAME PLAN '78

THE NFL PUTS ON A NEW FACE NEXT SEASON.

By Commissioner Pete Rozelle

The face of the National Football League is ever-changing. As the league grows, fans' interest in high-level competition keeps pace. Each year the NFL brings revisions to the game that are designed to increase fans' enjoyment by increasing the quality of play.

In 1978, you'll see a refreshingly new look to the NFL.

Perhaps you've read or heard about it. To begin with, the new schedule pattern calls for 16 regular season games, as opposed to the 14 we've been playing since 1961. Determining each team's scheduled opponents will be based on a fairer formula, one that uses the team's won-lost record during the previous season as the main guide.

There's a change in the postseason that qualifies an extra wild card team from each conference, bringing the total number of playoff teams to 10. Another week has been added to the playoff structure, which will mean that division winners can rest a week while waiting for two wild card teams to win their way into the round of eight finalists.

The unveiling of the new structure will come on Sunday, September 3, 1978. This is two weeks earlier than the start of the regular season in past years, and to compensate for the change, two preseason games have been removed. So the full season—up to and including Super Bowl XIII on January 21, 1979—is extended by only a week, the extra "wild card" week.

The key ingredient of any format or structure under which an organized sports league operates is that it be easily understood by the fans. Its essence must be simplicity. In our opinion, that's what the NFL now has.

It would be easy to segregate groups of teams into tight divisions, have them play the majority of their games within those divisions, and let the division winners emerge into a structured playoff system. But the result would be that many attractive teams with star players would never appear in many other cities unless those clubs happened to be matched against each other in the playoffs.

We think the new NFL schedule gives fans a neat competitive format and variety at the same time. It also reduces inequities in the strength of schedules that popped up too often in the past, under the system of rotating opponents over a period of years.

On Sunday night, December 18, an interested fan had only to look where his

or her favorite team finished in its division, and he or she immediately would be able to determine not only which teams the club would be facing next year, but also where the games would be played.

Here's how the schedule will work:

All teams will play round-robin home-and-home schedules within their divisions. This gives each team in a five-team division eight games and each team in a four-team division six games. A team in a four-team division brings its total to eight games by playing one game against each of the two fifth-place teams in the other divisions of the conference.

This of course adds four games to the schedule of each fifth-place team, bringing its total number of games to 12.

To complete the 16-game schedule for fifth-place teams, the two in each conference will play home-and-home against each other and then play one game with each of the two fifth-place finishers in the other conference.

To bring their total games to 12, teams that finish first through fourth will acquire an additional four games by playing each of the teams that finish first through fourth in a division of the other conference. (In 1978, AFC East plays NFC East, AFC Central plays NFC West, and AFC West plays NFC Central.) These divisional matchups will be rotated each year to provide an annual new look at fresh opponents.

Finally, the 16-game schedule of the first- through fourth-place teams will be completed by the scheduling of the first-place teams against the other two first-place teams in their conference and against the fourth-place teams in the other divisions and vice versa, fourth against first. Second- and third-place teams in each conference will pair off in the same manner.

What do we like about the new schedule and what do we expect will especially interest fans?

We like the fact that all teams in a division will face 12 common opponents; that all first- and fourth-place teams in a division, and all second- and third-place teams in a division will face 16 common opponents; and that both fifth-place teams in a conference will face 16 common opponents.

We like the fact that no longer will a team in a four-team division be at a disadvantage in gaining a wild card playoff spot because now the clubs in four-team divisions play two games with a fifth-place team just like the teams in the larger divisions.

We like the "instant" scheduling based on the standings, the variety of opponents, and the balance of scheduling caused by the large number of common opponents.

The balanced scheduling concept makes the NFL more *national*. It will create more attractive national telecasts, with more games between prospectively better teams.

Here's how the playoffs will work:

The six divisional winners will earn playoff spots and a week's rest while on Sunday, December 24, 1978 the two non-champion teams with the best won-lost records in each conference will play off for the right to enter the round of eight with the divisional winners on the following weekend. After that, the playoffs will proceed as in the past, right up to Super Bowl XIII on Sunday, January 21, 1979.

The additional wild card teams will add hope for improving teams in the second half of the season. It will make a wild card team achieve something additional before it competes with the division winners, and it will place more of a premium on finishing with the best record in the conference. The division winner that does that not only gets a week's rest, but it gets to play at home against the wild card winner that played the week before.

A complete listing of all AFC and NFC teams' opponents appears on pages 33 and 34. We hope you'll give the new game plan a good look.

Pete Rozelle

COMMISSIONER, NATIONAL FOOTBALL LEAGUE

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1978 AFC OPPONENTS

DATES AND ORDER OF GAMES WILL BE DETERMINED LATER; HOME AND AWAY GAMES ARE LISTED ALPHABETICALLY

BALTIMORE COLTS

HOME	AWAY
Buffalo	Buffalo
Cleveland	Dallas
Denver	Miami
Miami	New England
New England	New York Jets
New York Jets	Pittsburgh
Philadelphia	St. Louis
Washington	Seattle

BUFFALO BILLS

HOME	AWAY
Baltimore	Baltimore
Cincinnati	Cleveland
Kansas City	Houston
Miami	Kansas City
New England	Miami
New York Giants	New England
New York Jets	New York Jets
Pittsburgh	Tampa Bay

CINCINNATI BENGALS

HOME	AWAY
Atlanta	Buffalo
Cleveland	Cleveland
Houston	Houston
Kansas City	Los Angeles
New England	Miami
New Orleans	Pittsburgh
Oakland	San Diego
Pittsburgh	San Francisco

CLEVELAND BROWNS

HOME	AWAY
Buffalo	Atlanta
Cincinnati	Baltimore
Denver	Cincinnati
Houston	Houston
Los Angeles	Kansas City
New York Jets	New Orleans
Pittsburgh	Pittsburgh
San Francisco	Seattle

DENVER BRONCOS

HOME	AWAY
Chicago	Baltimore
Green Bay	Cleveland
Kansas City	Detroit
New York Jets	Kansas City
Oakland	Minnesota
Pittsburgh	Oakland
San Diego	San Diego
Seattle	Seattle

HOUSTON OILERS

HOME	AWAY
Buffalo	Atlanta
Cincinnati	Cincinnati
Cleveland	Cleveland
Los Angeles	Kansas City
Miami	New England
Pittsburgh	New Orleans
San Diego	Oakland
San Francisco	Pittsburgh

KANSAS CITY CHIEFS

HOME	AWAY
Buffalo	Buffalo
Cleveland	Cincinnati
Denver	Denver
Houston	New York Giants
Oakland	Oakland
San Diego	Pittsburgh
Seattle	San Diego
Tampa Bay	Seattle

MIAMI DOLPHINS

HOME	AWAY
Baltimore	Baltimore
Buffalo	Buffalo
Cincinnati	Houston
Dallas	New England
New England	New York Jets
New York Jets	Philadelphia
Oakland	San Diego
St. Louis	Washington

NEW ENGLAND PATRIOTS

HOME	AWAY
Baltimore	Baltimore
Buffalo	Buffalo
Houston	Cincinnati
Miami	Dallas
New York Jets	Miami
Philadelphia	New York Jets
San Diego	Oakland
Washington	St. Louis

NEW YORK JETS

HOME	AWAY
Baltimore	Baltimore
Buffalo	Buffalo
Dallas	Cleveland
Miami	Denver
New England	Miami
Pittsburgh	New England
St. Louis	Philadelphia
Seattle	Washington

OAKLAND RAIDERS

HOME	AWAY
Denver	Chicago
Detroit	Cincinnati
Houston	Denver
Kansas City	Green Bay
Minnesota	Kansas City
New England	Miami
San Diego	San Diego
Seattle	Seattle

PITTSBURGH STEELERS

HOME	AWAY
Atlanta	Buffalo
Baltimore	Cincinnati
Cincinnati	Cleveland
Cleveland	Denver
Houston	Houston
Kansas City	Los Angeles
New Orleans	New York Jets
Seattle	San Francisco

SAN DIEGO CHARGERS

HOME	AWAY
Chicago	Denver
Cincinnati	Detroit
Denver	Houston
Green Bay	Kansas City
Kansas City	Minnesota
Miami	New England
Oakland	Oakland
Seattle	Seattle

SEATTLE SEAHAWKS

HOME	AWAY
Baltimore	Chicago
Cleveland	Denver
Denver	Green Bay
Detroit	Kansas City
Kansas City	New York Jets
Minnesota	Oakland
Oakland	Pittsburgh
San Diego	San Diego

1978 NFC OPPONENTS

DATES AND ORDER OF GAMES WILL BE DETERMINED LATER; HOME AND AWAY GAMES ARE LISTED ALPHABETICALLY

ATLANTA FALCONS

HOME	AWAY
Cleveland	Chicago
Detroit	Cincinnati
Houston	Los Angeles
Los Angeles	New Orleans
New York Giants	Pittsburgh
New Orleans	St. Louis
San Francisco	San Francisco
Washington	Tampa Bay

CHICAGO BEARS

HOME	AWAY
Atlanta	Denver
Detroit	Detroit
Green Bay	Green Bay
Minnesota	Minnesota
Oakland	San Diego
St. Louis	San Francisco
Seattle	Tampa Bay
Tampa Bay	Washington

DALLAS COWBOYS

HOME	AWAY
Baltimore	Green Bay
Minnesota	Los Angeles
New England	Miami
New Orleans	New York Giants
New York Giants	New York Jets
Philadelphia	Philadelphia
St. Louis	St. Louis
Washington	Washington

DETROIT LIONS

HOME	AWAY
Chicago	Atlanta
Denver	Chicago
Green Bay	Green Bay
Minnesota	Minnesota
San Diego	Oakland
San Francisco	St. Louis
Washington	Seattle
Tampa Bay	Tampa Bay

GREEN BAY PACKERS

HOME	AWAY
Chicago	Chicago
Dallas	Denver
Detroit	Detroit
Minnesota	Los Angeles
New Orleans	Minnesota
Oakland	Philadelphia
Seattle	San Diego
Tampa Bay	Tampa Bay

LOS ANGELES RAMS

HOME	AWAY
Atlanta	Atlanta
Cincinnati	Cleveland
Dallas	Houston
Green Bay	Minnesota
New Orleans	New York Giants
Pittsburgh	New Orleans
San Francisco	Philadelphia
Tampa Bay	San Francisco

MINNESOTA VIKINGS

HOME	AWAY
Chicago	Chicago
Denver	Dallas
Detroit	Detroit
Green Bay	Green Bay
Los Angeles	New Orleans
Philadelphia	Oakland
San Diego	Seattle
Tampa Bay	Tampa Bay

NEW ORLEANS SAINTS

HOME	AWAY
Atlanta	Atlanta
Cleveland	Cincinnati
Houston	Dallas
Los Angeles	Green Bay
Minnesota	Los Angeles
New York Giants	Pittsburgh
Philadelphia	San Francisco
San Francisco	Tampa Bay

NEW YORK GIANTS

HOME	AWAY
Dallas	Atlanta
Kansas City	Buffalo
Los Angeles	Dallas
Philadelphia	New Orleans
St. Louis	Philadelphia
San Francisco	St. Louis
Tampa Bay	Tampa Bay
Washington	Washington

PHILADELPHIA EAGLES

HOME	AWAY
Dallas	Baltimore
Green Bay	Dallas
Los Angeles	Minnesota
Miami	New England
New York Giants	New Orleans
New York Jets	New York Giants
St. Louis	St. Louis
Washington	Washington

ST. LOUIS CARDINALS

HOME	AWAY
Atlanta	Chicago
Baltimore	Dallas
Dallas	Miami
Detroit	New York Giants
New England	New York Jets
New York Giants	Philadelphia
Philadelphia	San Francisco
Washington	Washington

SAN FRANCISCO 49ERS

HOME	AWAY
Atlanta	Atlanta
Chicago	Cleveland
Cincinnati	Detroit
Los Angeles	Houston
New Orleans	Los Angeles
Pittsburgh	New Orleans
St. Louis	New York Giants
Tampa Bay	Washington

TAMPA BAY BUCCANEERS

HOME	AWAY
Atlanta	Chicago
Buffalo	Detroit
Chicago	Green Bay
Detroit	Kansas City
Green Bay	Los Angeles
Minnesota	Minnesota
New Orleans	New York Giants
New York Giants	San Francisco

WASHINGTON REDSKINS

HOME	AWAY
Chicago	Atlanta
Dallas	Baltimore
Miami	Dallas
New York Giants	Detroit
New York Jets	New England
Philadelphia	New York Giants
St. Louis	Philadelphia
San Francisco	St. Louis

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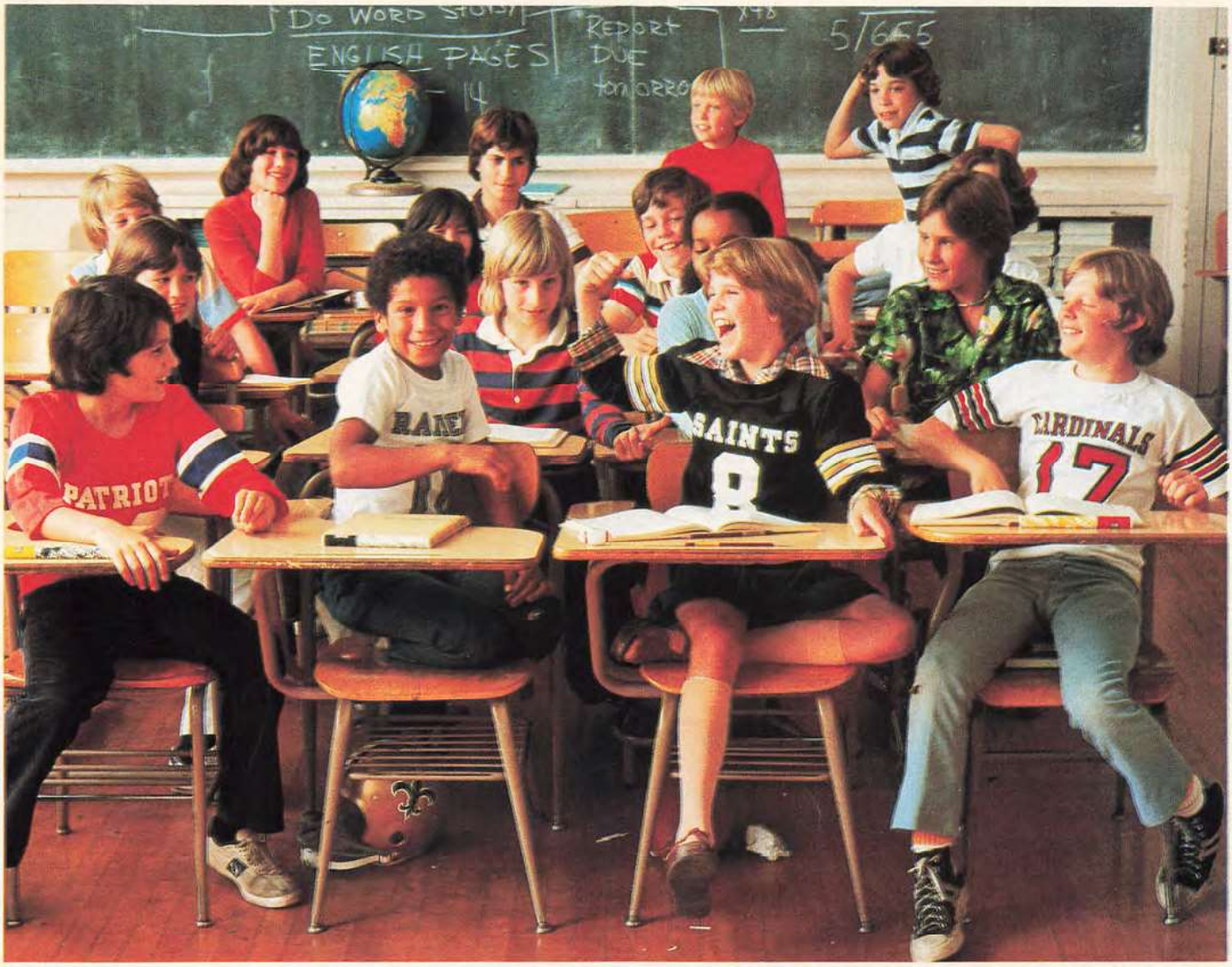

This Week Sister Mary Margaret's Front Four Includes a Patriot, a Raider, a Cardinal, and a Saint.

Of course, next week the lineup could be a Viking, a Bengal, a Chief, and a Dolphin. With 28 National Football League teams to choose from, it's likely there'll be a lot of trades before the season's over.

Offense or defense, you and your front four will look great in your Officially Licensed NFL jerseys from Rawlings.

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THE SUPER MEN

Illustrations by George S. Gaadt

The event is surreal to begin with. It's practically a refinement to end all refinements: the best versus the best. So how does one select the most valuable player? Put more correctly, how does the working press mark its ballots? What distinguishes Biletnikoff from Stabler, Swann from Bradshaw, Namath from Snell, to name a few hard decisions?

As today's game plays itself out, or even as early as mid-fourth quarter, try taking a poll of your own. By secret ballot, Row 58, Section 30 selects....

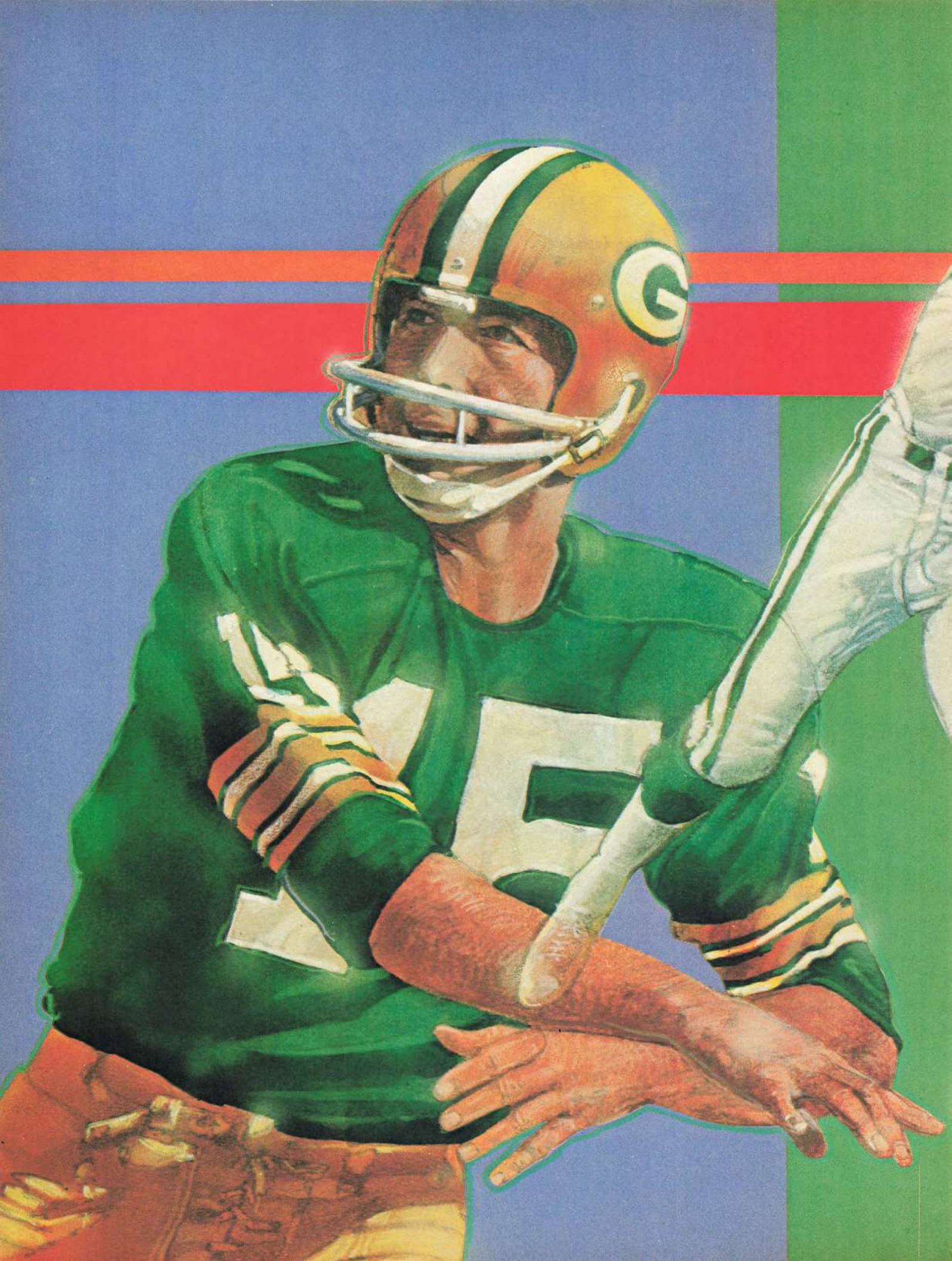
A quarterback? The winning quarterback has been voted the Super Bowl's most valuable player five times. After all, who on the field gets more attention? (Should there be a new category, "Most *Visible* Player"?)

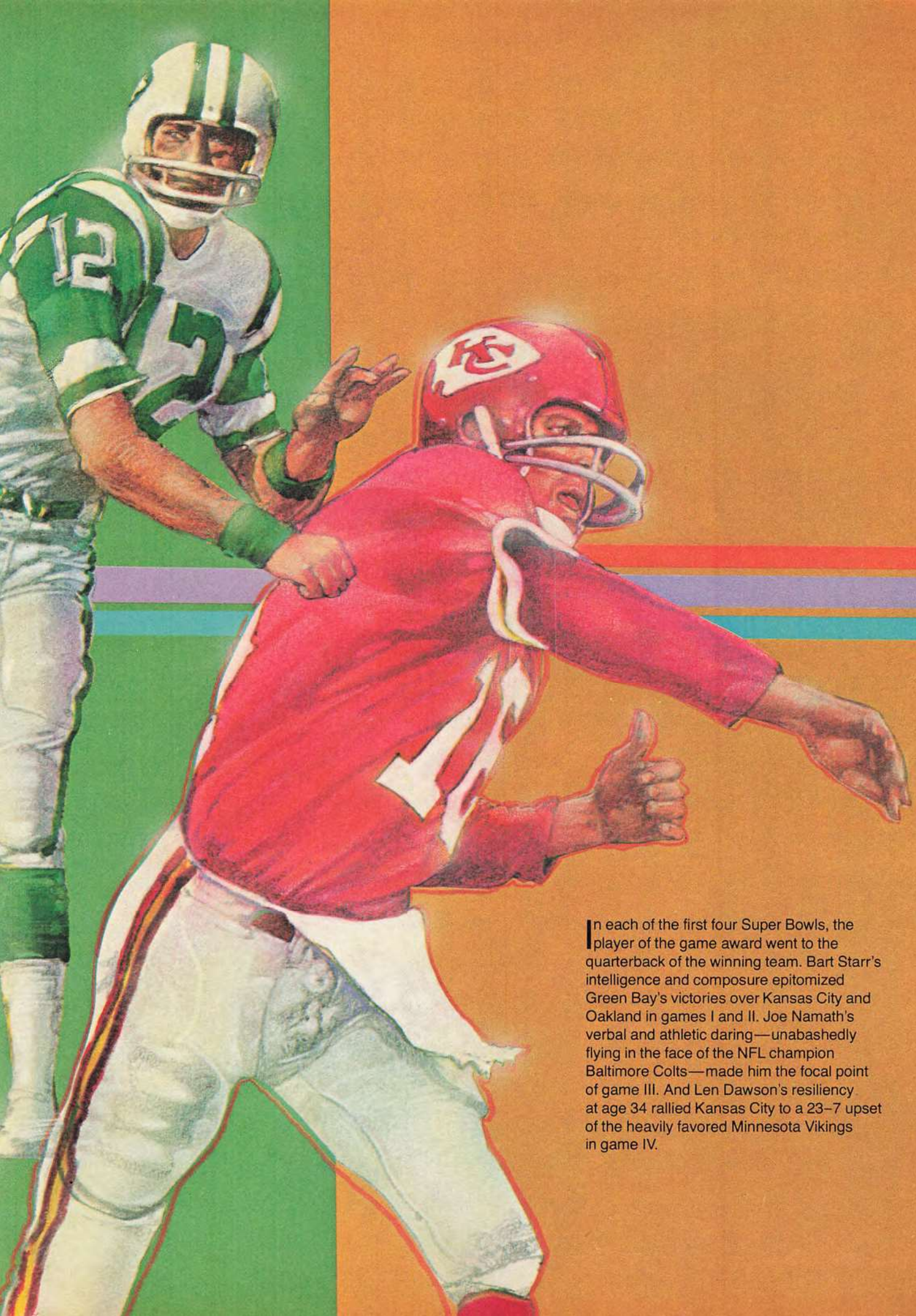
A running back? Two have been honored, Miami's Larry Csonka in Super Bowl VIII and Pittsburgh's Franco Harris in Super Bowl IX. Both men set individual rushing records. Note the rule of thumb: high-profile statistics seem to count heavily in the electors' minds.

A wide receiver? Here's a twist, and good reason to discard the rule of thumb. High-profile statistics may or may not mean much in the case of a pass catcher. Lynn Swann did catch the winning touchdown pass late in Super Bowl X but his contribution prior to that had been considerable. And all Oakland's Fred Biletnikoff did in Super Bowl XI was to catch four balls. He scored no points but set up two touchdowns.

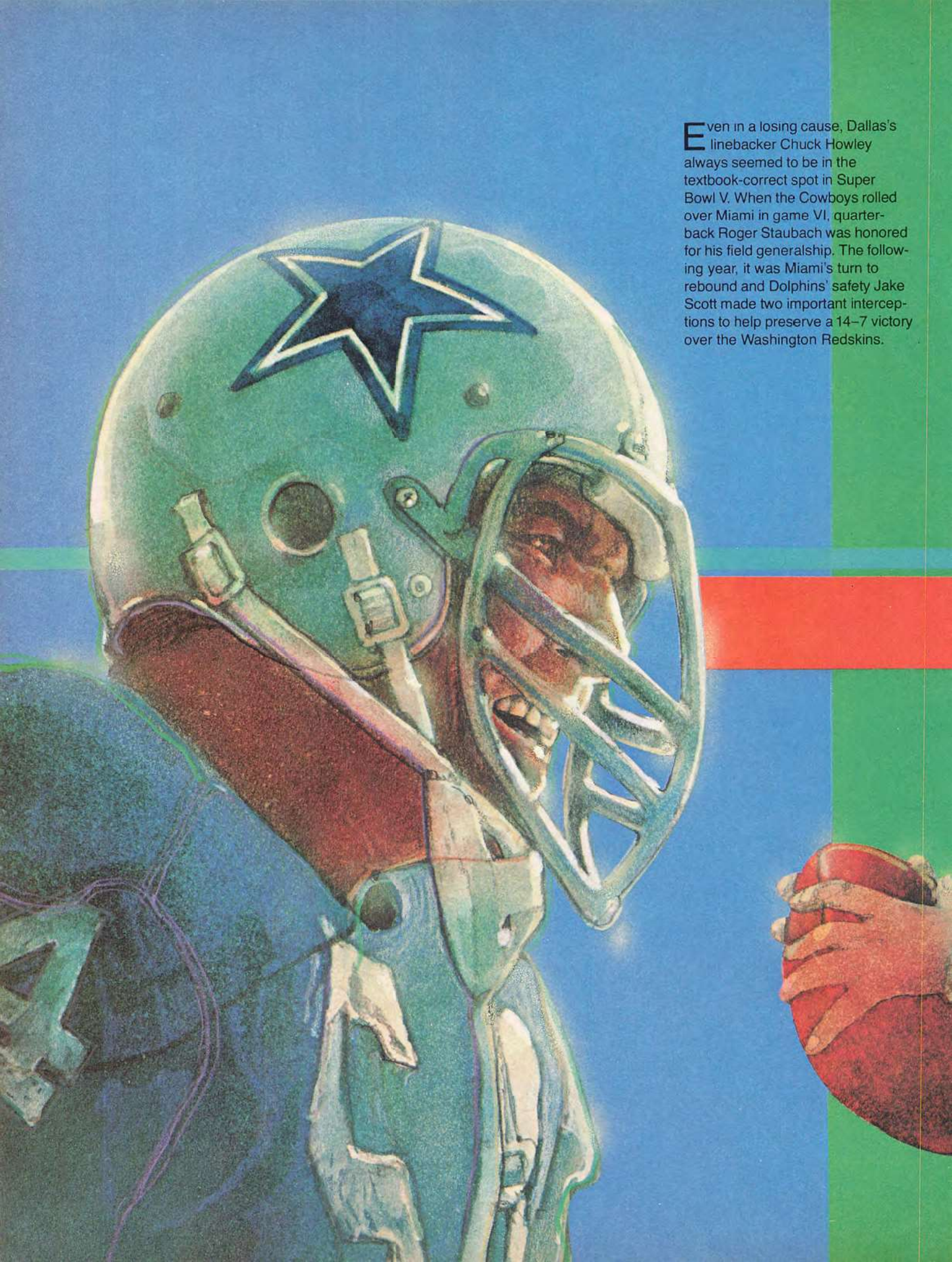
A defensive player? How about a defensive player from the losing team? Don't laugh. Can you name the most valuable player of Super Bowl V? Dallas linebacker Chuck Howley was the man of the day. Now name the winner of the award in Super Bowl VII. Does Miami's defensive back Jake Scott seem obscure? He wasn't obscure to Washington quarterback Billy Kilmer, who had two important passes picked off by the Dolphins' free safety.

A final tip: Notice that in 11 Super Bowls, no lineman has ever been elected most valuable player. For those playing the law of averages, that should narrow the possibilities to 18 or 20 men. Stay tuned for late returns.





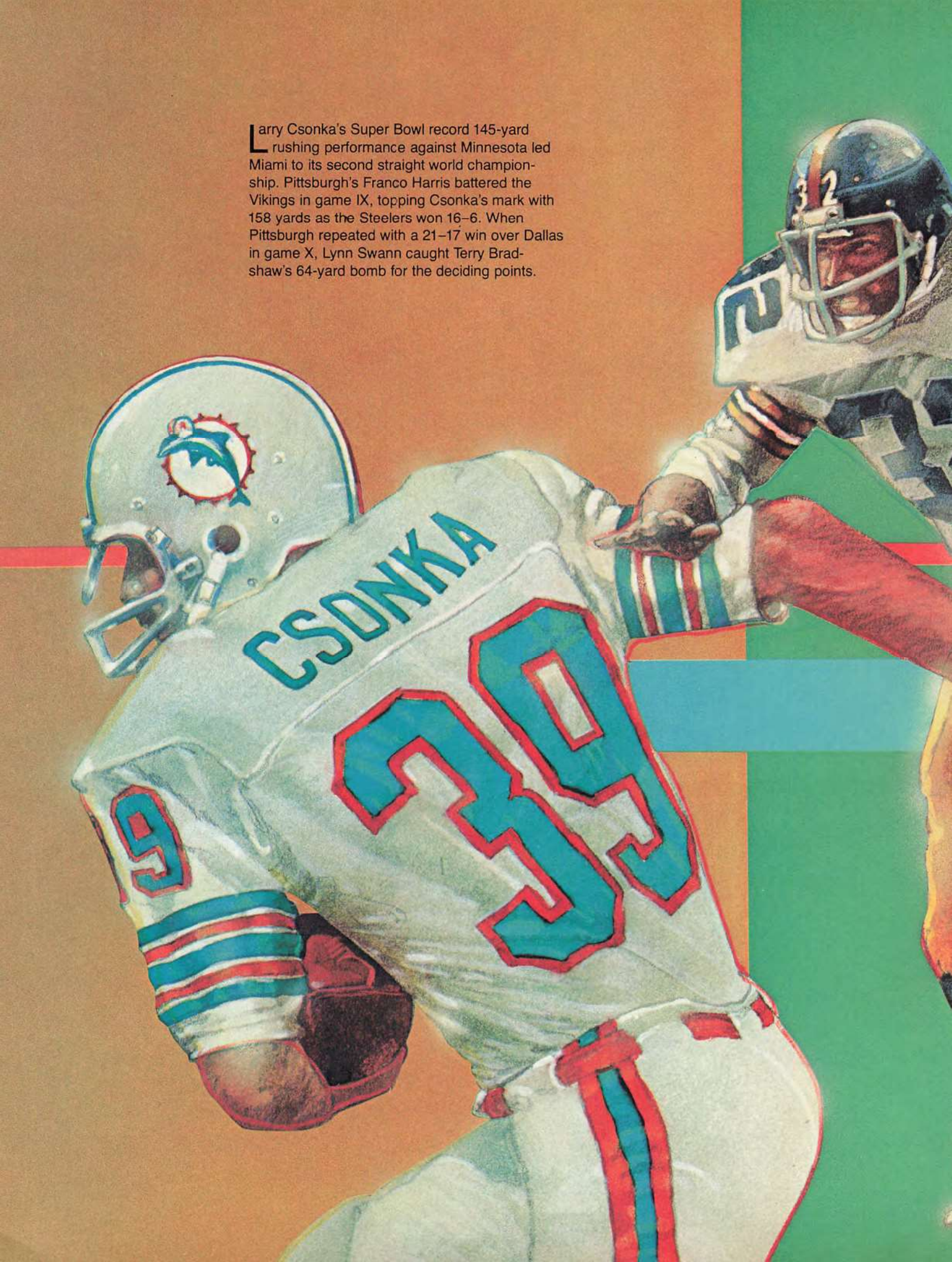
In each of the first four Super Bowls, the player of the game award went to the quarterback of the winning team. Bart Starr's intelligence and composure epitomized Green Bay's victories over Kansas City and Oakland in games I and II. Joe Namath's verbal and athletic daring—unabashedly flying in the face of the NFL champion Baltimore Colts—made him the focal point of game III. And Len Dawson's resiliency at age 34 rallied Kansas City to a 23–7 upset of the heavily favored Minnesota Vikings in game IV.



Even in a losing cause, Dallas's linebacker Chuck Howley always seemed to be in the textbook-correct spot in Super Bowl V. When the Cowboys rolled over Miami in game VI, quarterback Roger Staubach was honored for his field generalship. The following year, it was Miami's turn to rebound and Dolphins' safety Jake Scott made two important interceptions to help preserve a 14–7 victory over the Washington Redskins.

13

Larry Csonka's Super Bowl record 145-yard rushing performance against Minnesota led Miami to its second straight world championship. Pittsburgh's Franco Harris battered the Vikings in game IX, topping Csonka's mark with 158 yards as the Steelers won 16–6. When Pittsburgh repeated with a 21–17 win over Dallas in game X, Lynn Swann caught Terry Bradshaw's 64-yard bomb for the deciding points.



88

Fred Biletnikoff's special artistry produced four important catches in Oakland's 32–14 win over Minnesota in Super Bowl XI. Though he didn't score all afternoon, the Raiders' veteran wide receiver teamed with quarterback Ken Stabler on pass plays of 48 and 17 yards to set up two touchdowns.

"*Reaching breezes,*
Captain and three-man crew,
and we made it through the Bermuda Triangle.
What more could you ask for?"

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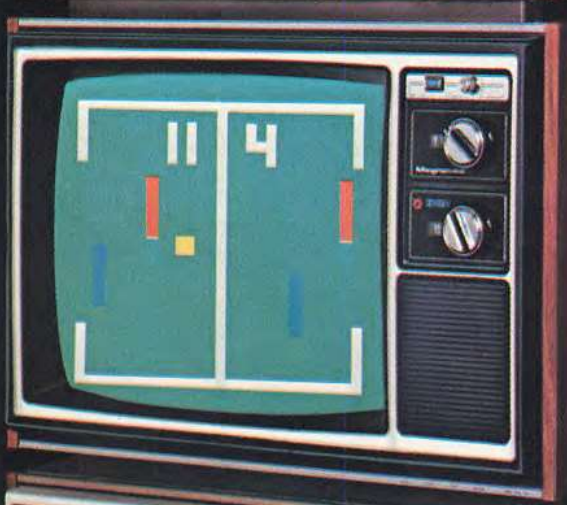

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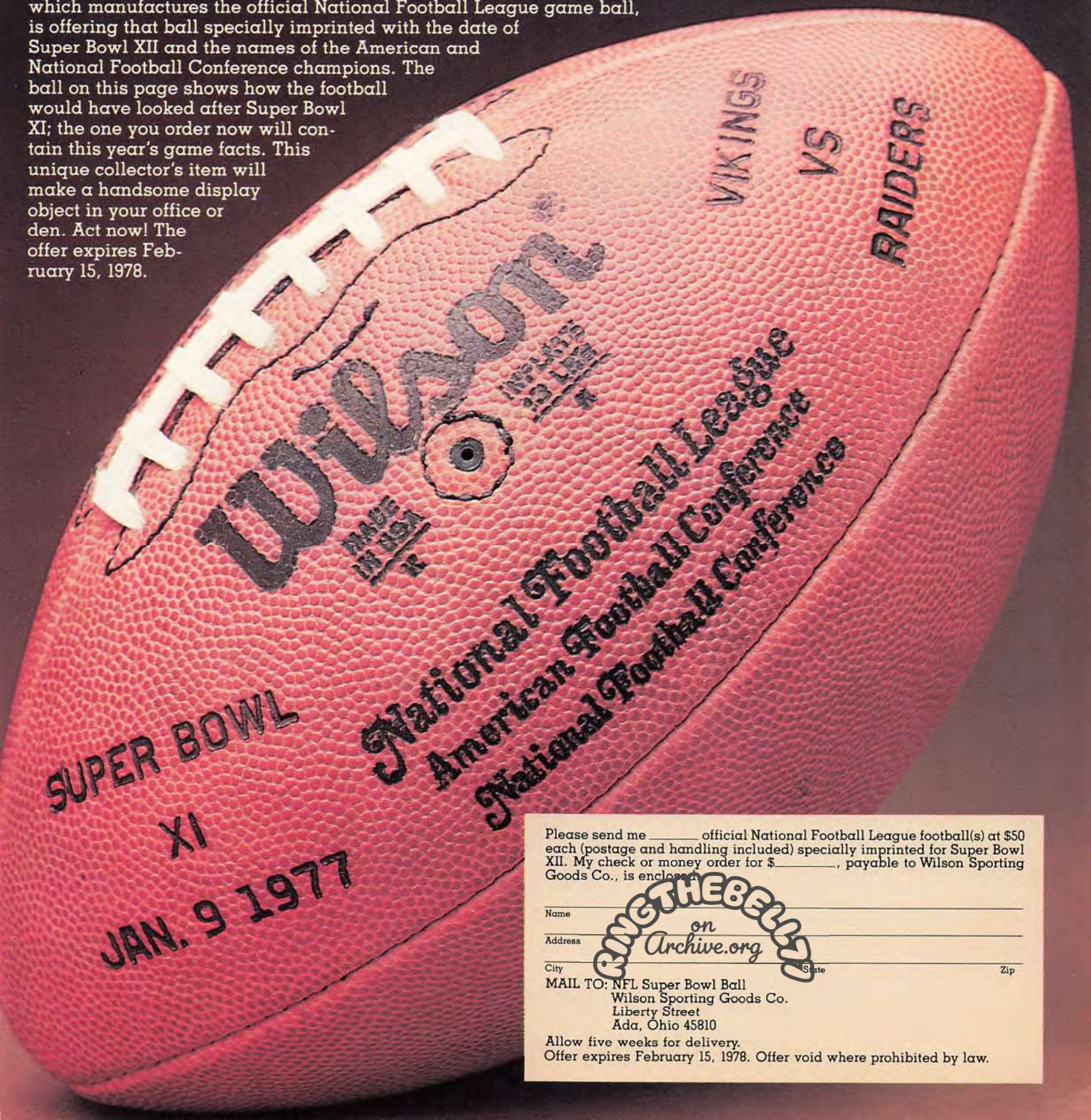

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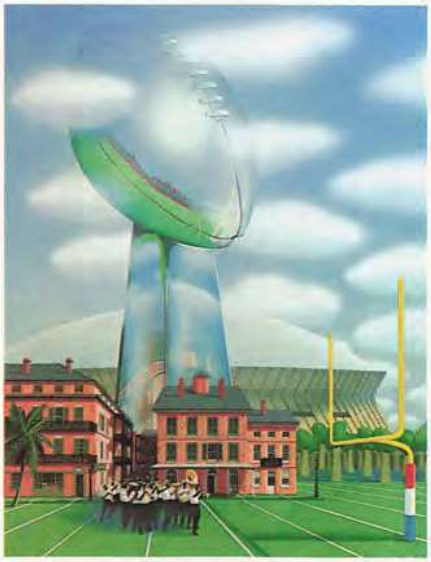
Broncos vs. Cowboys

Scouting Report



Those of you whose hearts can stand the heavy pregame beating, gather around. This, to paraphrase the author of the phrase "there's no tomorrow," is it.

Followers of the Super Bowl, the ultimate in National Football League competition and showpersonship, know that during its 11-year history, the game has confounded most of its soothsayers. The transition from game IX to game X, for example, was a dramatic turnaround. Though the Pittsburgh Steelers won both games, the complexion of the two contests went from dark defensive pallor to a ruddy-faced brawl . . .Then in 1977, amidst predictions that the event would forever be as competitive and emotionally draining as the Steelers' thrilling victory over the Dallas Cowboys, the Oakland Raiders pounded the Minnesota Vikings into the turf of Pasadena's Rose Bowl.

Now come two teams whose coaches reflect vastly divergent paths to success in professional football. The man you see at the center of activity along the American Football Conference side line, the one with a virtual road atlas of NFL cities etched in his expression, is Robert (Red) Miller, head coach of the AFC champion Denver Broncos. At age 49, Miller left a job as offensive coordinator with the New England Patriots to accept the Broncos' helm. The eighth head coach of a team that at that point had known only two winning seasons and no playoff appearances in its 17-year history, Miller himself was accustomed to what must have seemed an odyssey of assistantships: Boston Patriots, Buffalo Bills, Denver, St. Louis Cardinals, Baltimore Colts, New England Patriots. Miller, like the Broncos, had served a 17-year penance.

But while Miller stalks the home team's side of the field equipped with his upstairs-downstairs headset, his adversary orchestrates the NFC champions' presentation with nothing more than a natty little narrow-brimmed hat. Tom Landry is the only coach of the Dallas Cowboys in the 18-year history of the franchise. Landry is his own coordinator, a master coach with total command of the whole complicated matrix he has fashioned from computer readouts and years of experimenting as a player and coach in the NFL. He has now guided the Cowboys to the postseason tournament 11 of the last 12 years and put together 12 straight winning seasons. He is in his fourth Super Bowl, having lost Game V to the Baltimore Colts 16–13, won Game VI 24–3 against the Miami Dolphins, and lost Game X to the Pittsburgh Steelers 21–17.

The quarterback who started Super Bowl V for Landry also is here today, having traveled a circuitous route. Craig Morton, an All-America at the University of California, was the Cowboys' first draft choice in 1965. After 10 years with Dallas, he was traded to the New York Giants in 1974 and played two years there before he was traded to the Broncos for quarterback Steve Ramsey. A question mark at the outset of the preseason, Morton became Red Miller's starting quarterback and passed for nearly 2,000 yards with a completion percentage of 51.6. Marked changes in his personal life complemented the acumen of 12 previous years in the league and Morton's comeback was emblematic of the Broncos' resurgence as a team. Now, facing his original NFL club, he's bound to sense a heady mix of irony and nostalgia.

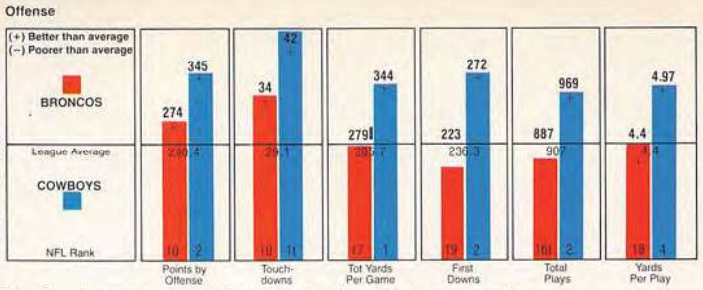
Even the stoical Landry has suggested in recent weeks that playing against Morton carries with it a degree of emotion. Following the Cowboys' 14–6 victory over the Broncos in the final game of the regular season, during which Morton left with an injured hip early in the first period, Landry said, "This was a game we were ready to play at first. Then when Craig came out it took some of the luster off."

Today's opponents have traveled to New Orleans via two very dissimilar competitive routes. The Broncos achieved their 12–2 regular season mark by facing not only a tough round robin in the AFC West; they also had to face out-of-division foes such as St. Louis, Cincinnati, Pittsburgh, Baltimore, and the Cowboys themselves. Dallas, on the other hand, dealt with an out-of-division schedule that included Minnesota, Tampa Bay, Detroit, Pittsburgh, and San Francisco. Against the 49ers in a Monday night contest, the Cowboys' accomplished secondary was riddled for four touchdown passes by sore-armed Jim Plunkett.

But enough of the preamble. Flip the coin, easy on the predictions, and, wherever possible, hold the cliches.

77

Broncos



The items in these charts are listed left to right in their order of importance, based on their correlation with two measures of success—games won and lost, and points scored and points allowed.

The Cowboys have a decided edge in the offensive categories.

The arrival of Robert (Red) Miller, a former offensive coordinator with the New England Patriots and journeyman assistant coach around the NFL, signaled a more balanced approach to football in the Mile High City.

The Broncos put together a 5–1 record in the preseason, a club record. More significant was the fact that unlike previous years, Denver had settled on a solid starting quarterback. Craig Morton, late of the New York Giants and prior to that an up-and-down performer with the Dallas Cowboys, would direct the Broncos' attack.

Although Denver finished the 1977 season with more rushes and fewer passes than in 1976, Morton brought the Broncos experience and leadership. Add to this the positive changes in Morton's outlook off the field—deep religious fervor and a midseason marriage—and the Broncos' leadership problems were all but dissolved.

Offensively, the Broncos can call on a group of running backs whose forte is durability. With the exception of Otis Armstrong, Denver's ball carriers are not long on flash.

Through the air, Morton can call on one of the better receiving corps in the league in terms of variety of abilities. Tight end Riley Odoms is probably the most glaring Pro Bowl omission in the AFC.

Defensively, no group in the league has received the coverage and applause earned by Denver's "Orange Crush" unit. The Broncos' 3–4 alignment features four of the quickest linebackers around. The "Crush" allowed opponents a total of 148 points during the regular season.

Add to all this the temperament of head coach Miller, who doesn't mind a good gamble now and again—hardly ever in his own territory, mind you, but on the other side of the 50 the potential for surprise is definitely there. And don't give him the line about Dallas's having been to the Super Bowl before. He's brought the Broncos this far by defying the odds, and the mystique and hoopla of Game XII in the big living room should be his kind of party.

The 14–2 Season of 1977

Sept. 18 A mishandled punt attempt put the Broncos in position for the only score they needed. Denver 7, St. Louis 0.

Sept. 25 The Broncos' defense held O.J. Simpson to 43 yards while Otis Armstrong ran up 96 of his own in rout of Bills. Denver 26, Buffalo 6.

Oct. 2 Craig Morton's running and passing produced two touchdowns in the Kingdome. Denver 24, Seattle 13.

Oct. 9 Six turnovers by the Chiefs, six sacks by the Broncos, and another defensive masterpiece gave the Broncos a 4–0 start. Denver 23, Kansas City 7.

Oct. 16 The Broncos intercepted Ken Stabler seven times and placekicker Jim Turner scored the first touchdown of his career. Denver 30, Oakland 7.

Oct. 23 Backup quarterback Craig Penrose led a time-consuming touchdown drive that shut off the Bengals and kept Broncos unbeaten. Denver 24, Cincinnati 13.

Oct. 30 "Orange Sunday" in Denver paled somewhat as the Raiders shot to a 24–0 lead. Oakland 24, Denver 14.

Nov. 6 Rick Upchurch returned five punts for 167 yards, including an 87-yard touchdown. Denver 21, Pittsburgh 7.

Nov. 13 Morton's touchdown pass to Haven Moses on fourth-and-four with 1:36 to play upended the upstart Chargers. Denver 17, San Diego 14.

Nov. 20 More late-game heroics: Morton to Moses with 4:29 left, then a goal line stand at game's end to produce second victory of 1977 over Chiefs. Denver 14, Kansas City 7.

Nov. 27 Tom Jackson's 73-yard interception return was the turning point as the Broncos moved to 10–1 with a victory over AFC East leaders. Denver 27, Baltimore 13.

Dec. 4 Morton, playing despite a strained shoulder, threw touchdown passes to Upchurch and Riley Odoms and the Broncos clinched the AFC West. Denver 24, Houston 14.

Dec. 11 Morton's two passes to Odoms in the fourth quarter set up Turner's deciding field goal. Denver 17, San Diego 9.

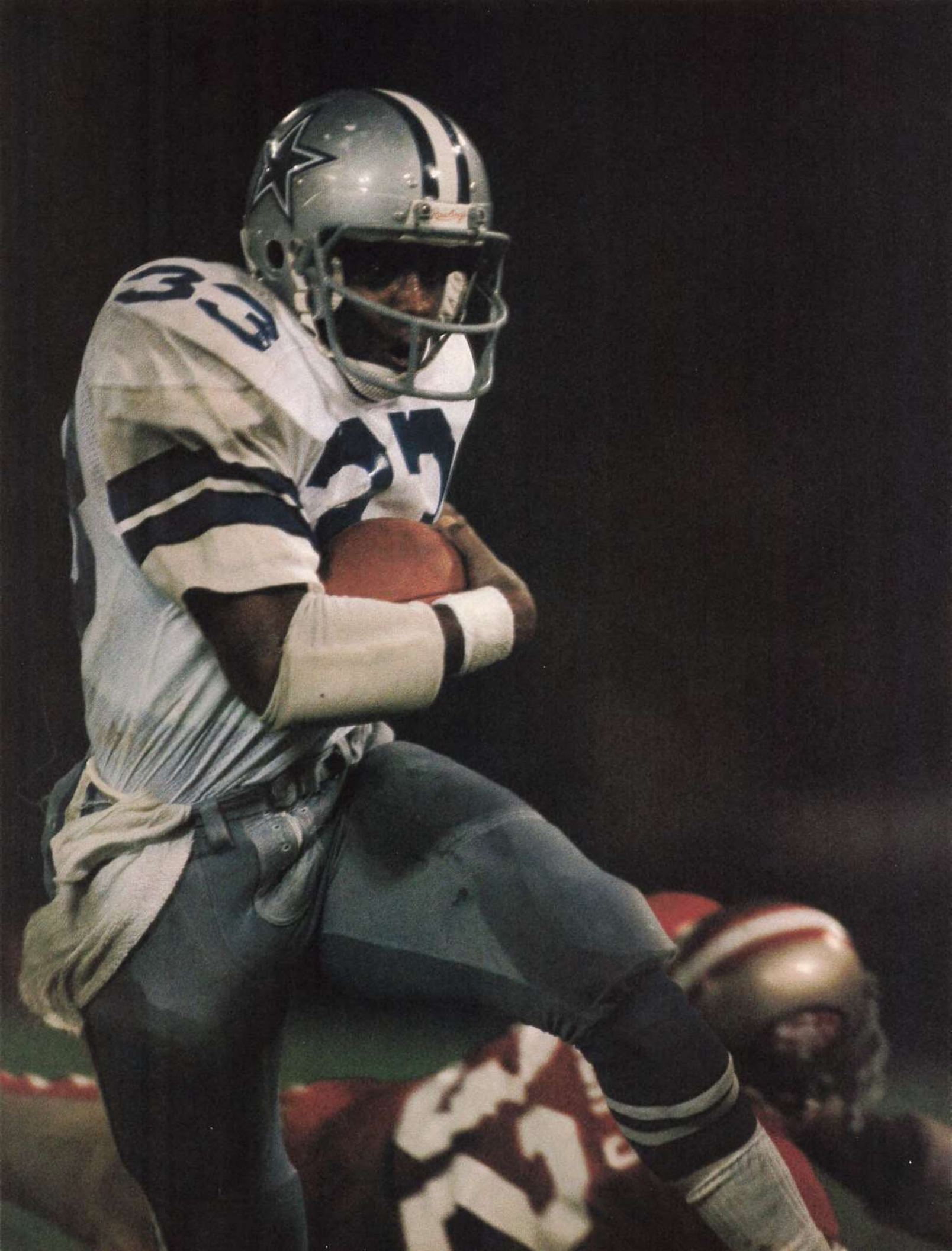
Dec. 18 Roger Staubach and Tony Dorsett dominated a regular season finale for two division champions as Broncos' second-half field goals fell short. Dallas 14, Denver 6.

Dec. 24 The Broncos scored 13 points in the last 7 minutes in their first playoff game ever. Denver 34, Pittsburgh 21.

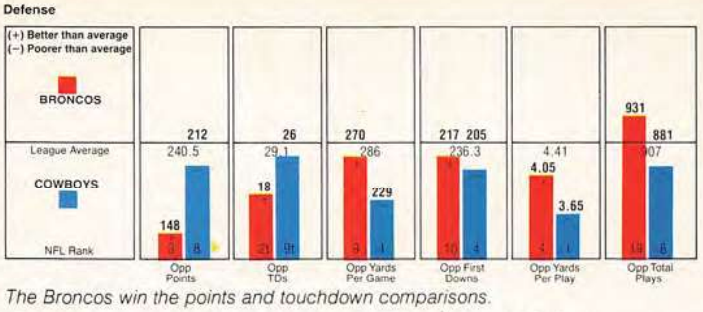
Jan. 1 In the American Conference title game, Morton threw two touchdown passes to Haven Moses as the Broncos upset the Raiders. Denver 20, Oakland 17.

Patience and execution, patience and execution. Now in his seventh year with the Broncos, defensive end Lyle Alzado (left) personifies the tortuous waiting process known so well to Denver players and fans. His status as a pass rusher with few peers, as well as his selection as a Pro Bowl starter, identifies him as the cornerstone of the "Orange Crush" defense. In the Broncos' 3-4 alignment, Alzado works with opposite end Barney Chavous and nose tackle Rubin Carter in the down three, with linebacking help from Bob Swenson, Joe Rizzo, Randy Gradishar, and Tom Jackson. The latter four are recognized as probably the quickest combination in the league at their positions. Defensive backs Louis Wright, Steve Foley, Bill Thompson, and Bernard Jackson complete the unit, which set a club record for fewest points allowed (148) that was 58 points lower than the team's previous mark.

Peter Read Miller



Cowboys



The Broncos win the points and touchdown comparisons.

As far back as last May, people were predicting a trip to Super Bowl XII for the Dallas Cowboys. The addition of Tony Dorsett, the sages reasoned, decidedly strengthened the running game, which had not been up to Super Bowl standards.

Action spoke louder than all the words during the 1977 season and the Cowboys went out and earned a trip to the playoffs, where they convincingly whipped Chicago and Minnesota.

The 1977 season saw the Cowboys compile a 14–2 record by winning—and losing—in clusters. They opened with a club record eight straight wins, suffered momentary letdowns in losses to St. Louis and Pittsburgh, then won six straight as a prelude to today's game.

The last three games may have the most bearing on what transpires in New Orleans. In their regular season finale the Cowboys defeated their Super Bowl XII opponent, Denver, 14–6 in Dallas. The following week, in the divisional playoffs, they stopped the Bears 37–7 by shackling Walter Payton. Two weeks ago they showed their defensive might in a 23–6 humbling of the Vikings.

Dallas posted impressive numbers on its journey to New Orleans: best total offense and best total defense in the NFL, best rushing defense in the NFC, and the NFC's number two rating in pass offense and pass defense.

If the Cowboys are monsters (figurative), their Dr. Frankenstein is Tom Landry, the coach with the stratospheric IQ who has been the franchise's leader for all of its 18 seasons.

Quarterback Roger Staubach is the man at the controls of the offense, which averaged 343.7 yards and scored more points than any team in the league. He was the NFC's top rated passer.

Harvey Martin spearheaded a vicious pass rush and recorded 23 quarterback sacks; the Cowboys were tops in the NFC with 53.

Now Dallas must face a Denver team that at times has appeared to have fate as a twelfth man on the field...a young, talented, and enthusiastic Broncos squad that knocked the Oakland Raiders from their perch as world champions.

The 14–2 Season of 1977

Sept. 18 A short Vikings punt set up a 47-yard touchdown drive in overtime. Staubach scored from the 4. Dallas 16, Minnesota 10.

Sept. 25 Dorsett scored two touchdowns, Staubach passed for 235 yards, and the Cowboys buried New York in 98-degree heat. Dallas 41, New York Giants 21.

Oct. 2 Henderson returned an interception 79 yards for a touchdown and Herrera kicked three field goals. Dallas 23, Tampa Bay 7.

Oct. 9 Dorsett scored twice, once on a 77-yard run, and rushed for 141 yards. The Cowboys rallied in the fourth quarter to win. Dallas 30, St. Louis 24.

Oct. 16 The Cowboys' defense collected eight sacks and limited the Redskins to one yard net passing. Staubach threw two long touchdown passes. Dallas 34, Washington 16.

Oct. 23 Saldi blocked a punt in the fourth quarter and Waters returned it 17 yards for the touchdown that beat the Eagles. Dallas 16, Philadelphia 10.

Oct. 30 Martin had three sacks, Staubach three touchdown passes, and Herrera three field goals. Dallas 37, Detroit 0.

Nov. 6 The Cowboys were penalized 14 times but overcame that with seven sacks. Dallas 24, New York Giants 10.

Nov. 14 Jim Hart rallied the Cardinals with a pair of fourth quarter touchdown passes to send the Cowboys to their first loss. St. Louis 24, Dallas 17.

Nov. 20 Franco Harris rushed for a career high 179 yards and scored two touchdowns. Pittsburgh 28, Dallas 13.

Nov. 27 Staubach's fourth down quarterback sneak set up Dorsett's winning touchdown from the 1 in the third quarter. Dallas 14, Washington 7.

Dec. 4 Dorsett gained 206 yards and scored touchdowns on runs of 1 and 84 yards. The Cowboys won their divisional title for the ninth time. Dallas 24, Philadelphia 14.

Dec. 13 Staubach passed for 220 yards and three touchdowns and ran one yard for another score. Dallas 42, San Francisco 35.

Dec. 18 Staubach tossed a pair of touchdown passes and the defense limited the Broncos to a pair of second half field goals. Dallas 14, Denver 6.

Dec. 26 The Cowboys collected seven Bears turnovers and held Walter Payton to 60 yards as they opened the playoffs. Dallas 37, Chicago 7.

Jan. 1 The Cowboys' defense set up three touchdowns with fumble recoveries in the NFC title game. Dallas 23, Minnesota 6.

Despite its sophistication in past years, the Dallas offense lacked the one ingredient to make it complete: the breakaway running back who could score from anywhere on the field. That's why Tony Dorsett and the Cowboys were made for each other. Dorsett, who won the 1976 Heisman trophy while at the University of Pittsburgh, is the added dimension who transformed a good team into a great one. He started only five games his rookie year yet rushed for 1,007 yards and scored 12 touchdowns. He had runs of 77 and 84 yards and a 200-yard game; he caught 29 passes for 273 yards. Dorsett's presence has not turned the Dallas offense into a one-dimensional attack. Robert Newhouse, the fireplug-sized running back, gives power up the middle and excellent blocking support.

Peter Read Miller

Rushing

Broncos

If Denver can claim depth at any position on the field, it's at running back. While Otis Armstrong led the club with a mere 489 yards on the ground, the rotation of five backs produced a total of 1,807. Add an assortment of quarterback keepers and end-arounds, and the Broncos came up with the AFC's seventh best rushing mark, 2,043 yards.

Against Dallas's flex defense, the blocking schemes must be precise. Firing on anyone is tough and hook blocking is equally difficult. An interesting key here will be the positioning of tight end Riley Odoms. Since the Dallas defense flip-flops outside linebackers, moving Thomas Henderson to the strong side and D. D. Lewis to the weak side, Odoms will find himself faced with Henderson throughout the game. Now add another wrinkle: By putting Odoms in motion, Denver stands a good chance of catching Lewis and Henderson in a switch and opening up new running lanes.

Assessing the matchups that face the Broncos' offensive line, the big burden falls to the left side. Left tackle Andy Maurer will be going against Pro Bowl defensive end Harvey Martin. Maurer, a converted guard, has had a good year, but for toughness, the edge here goes to Martin. Score a double-plus for Dallas defensive tackle Randy White against the Broncos' left guard, Tom Glassic. White is the breakthrough expert in the Cowboys' front four and can create genuine havoc.

Center Mike Montler, strong and intelligent, is the nexus of Denver's charge. His main job today will be to try to cut down middle linebacker Bob Breunig, then to stay up and drive the opposition out of the middle. This includes giving Glassic plenty of help with White.

On the right side, guard Paul Howard faces Jethro Pugh. Howard is especially efficient when called upon to pull or trap block. Right tackle Claudie Minor looks across the line at Ed (Too Tall) Jones, whose most recent performance rendered Minnesota's Pro Bowl tackle Ron Yary virtually helpless. But Minor should get more than able assistance from tight end Odoms, who'll be able to move down on Jones if he's not preoccupied with linebacker Henderson. Then again, Denver may solve the Jones problem by bringing up running back Lonnie Perrin.

Perrin, 6 foot 1 inch, 222 pounds, led Denver's running backs with a 4.1 average; he relies on power. Another in his mold is Jon Keyworth.

Rob Lytle possesses good acceleration and fine overall speed. In a close game, when short yardage and ball possession are at a premium, look for a combination of Perrin and Jim Jensen.

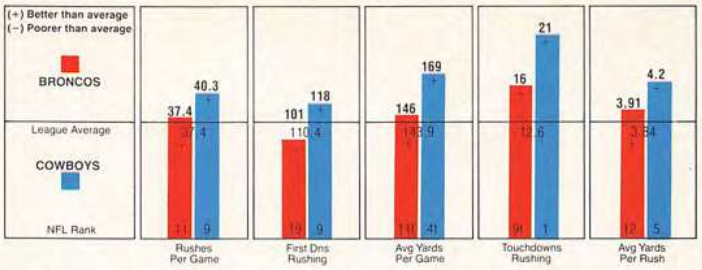
But Armstrong, if he's fully recovered from the ankle injury that bothered him in the late season, could be the extra dimension Denver needs in this department—that is, a genuine breakaway threat.

Rushing	Att.	Yards	Avg.	Long	TDs
Armstrong	130	489	3.8	35	4
Perrin	110	456	4.1	62	3
Lytle	104	408	3.9	21	1
Keyworth	83	311	3.7	16	1
Jensen	40	143	3.6	12	1
Morton	31	125	4.0	15	4
Weese	11	56	5.1	21	1
Penrose	4	24	6.0	17	0
Upchurch	1	19	19.0	19t	1
Dolbin	2	12	6.0	14	0
Kiick	1	1	1.0	1	0
Dilts	1	0	0.0	0	0
Moses	5	−1	−0.2	8	0

Lonnie Perrin, Broncos' second leading rusher, gets support from guard Steve Schindler (67).

Armstrong's 489 ground yards led the club.

Keyworth is able backup rusher.



The Dallas running game, led by Dorsett and Newhouse, is superior.

Cowboys

For years the Cowboys received considerable mileage out of a "no name" running attack. That anonymity ended this season because of the presence of Tony Dorsett, who was drafted on the first round after winning the Heisman trophy at the University of Pittsburgh.

Dorsett gave the Cowboys the breakaway threat they had not enjoyed in their previous championship years. Despite not starting until the tenth game of the season, he rushed for 1,007 yards, scored 12 touchdowns, averaged 4.8 yards a carry, and set team records for longest run (84 yards) and most yards rushing in a game (206).

Robert Newhouse, the small (5 feet 10 inches) but powerful fullback, is Dorsett's running mate. He gained 721 yards and helped Dorsett to his remarkable year with excellent blocking on sweeps and plays between the tackles.

The Cowboys ranked third in the NFC in rushing, averaging 169.2 yards per game. Dallas's running attack is predicated on confusing defenses with a variety of formations and last-minute shifts. Everything materializes behind a talented offensive line.

Center John Fitzgerald, right guard Tom Rafferty, and right tackle Pat Donovan form a unique "Irish Connection" for the Cowboys. Fitzgerald is quick and strong and will be involved in a classic matchup with the Broncos' middle guard, Rubin Carter. Rafferty is a second-year man from Penn State who also can play center if needed. Donovan, "the best athlete in the line," according to Landry, will be paired against Barney Chavous.

The left side is anchored by guard Herbert Scott, who is in his third year, and tackle Ralph Neely, the cagey 13-year veteran who has announced his retirement. Neely will battle Lyle Alzado, Denver's best lineman.

The running attack is not limited to the thrusts of Dorsett and Newhouse. Preston Pearson is an excellent all-purpose back who not only runs, blocks, and catches passes, but has shown an ability to deliver the big play. He is an ex-basketball player the Cowboys obtained as a free agent after he was released by the Steelers in 1975. He was the starter when Dorsett wasn't and rushed for 341 yards.

It is a time-honored cliche, but the key to the Cowboys' offensive attack against Denver rests on their ability to establish a running game against the stingy Broncos, who had the NFL's best defense against the rush (3.2-yard average). One of Dorsett's major strengths is his ability to get outside into one-on-one situations with the defense. But teams in the AFC have learned that it is extremely difficult to run wide on the Broncos and their cast of super pursuers. By breaking an outside run, the Cowboys will open up the middle for the power bursts of Newhouse and the quick slants and traps of Dorsett.

Rushing	Att.	Yards	Avg.	Long	TDs
Dorsett	208	1,007	4.8	84t	12
Newhouse	180	721	4.0	29	3
P. Pearson	89	341	3.8	22	1
Staubach	51	171	3.4	33	3
Dennison	12	60	5.0	17	1
Brinson	8	28	3.5	20t	1
D. Pearson	2	22	11.0	11	0
Laidlaw	9	15	1.7	8	0
DuPree	3	9	3.0	7	0
D. White	1	−2	−2.0	—	0
Johnson	1	−3	−3.0	—	0

Robert Newhouse is not flashy, but consistent.

Tony Dorsett lived up to the billings. He scored 12 touchdowns, rushed for 1,007 yards.

Passing

Broncos

Conventional wisdom has it that in order to win Super Bowl XII, Denver will have to throw the ball well. Against a mammoth defensive line, mobile linebackers, and a secondary that includes two Pro Bowl safeties, Craig Morton's work will have to be assertive and precise. After all, the Cowboys' pass defense was the second best, statistically, in the NFC.

Problem number one, however, is not what Morton does, but how well he's protected, which wasn't very well in 1977. Denver permitted its quarterback to be sacked 50 times. Dallas, meanwhile, was second in the NFL in quarterback sacks with 53. Harvey Martin, crashing in from his right end position, had the astonishing total of 23. In situations where he's lined up against Martin, tight end Riley Odoms can help left offensive tackle Andy Maurer protect Morton. In the offensive backfield, Rob Lytle will no doubt be called upon to use a skip-out-and-hook block, a form of blindsiding, to stop Martin. Morton will probably go with a low-risk passing game, and for more reasons than the hip injury that followed him from week 13 of the regular season to the AFC championship game with Oakland. Against the Cowboys, it's lethal to try the middle, with strong safety Charlie Waters and free safety Cliff Harris policing those zones.

One of the key strengths among Morton's receivers is their average yardage per pass reception. Wide receiver Haven Moses, a prime example, averaged 20 yards a catch. Moving from the slot position, Moses will be in head-to-head confrontation with Dallas cornerback Aaron Kyle. This could be the most interesting matchup of the day, since Denver likes to exploit Moses's explosive speed.

In clear passing situations, Dallas will substitute defensive backs Mark Washington and Randy Hughes for linebackers D.D. Lewis and Bob Breunig. This may have a pronounced effect on the coverage Odoms receives, since strong safety Waters draws the tight end. Look for Odoms to work on Waters in the flat.

Dolbin's speed (he's been timed at 4.2 for 40 yards) and hands placed him third on the list of Broncos' receivers, with 26 catches and a 17-yard average. He's got the moves to exploit the most penetrable spot in the Cowboys' secondary, Barnes's left corner position.

Rick Upchurch, better known as a punt and kickoff return specialist, averaged 20.4 yards a reception in 1977. A leg injury bothered him during the AFC championship game, but if two weeks' rest is sufficient, Upchurch is a home run threat.

Out of the backfield, Rob Lytle, Lonnie Perrin, and Jim Jensen are all capable of picking up excellent yardage on short passes.

Passing	Att.	Comp.	Yards	Pct.	TDs	Int.	Rating
Morton	254	131	1,929	51.6	14	8	82.1
Penrose	40	21	217	52.5	0	4	28.9
Weese	20	11	119	55.0	1	0	89.4

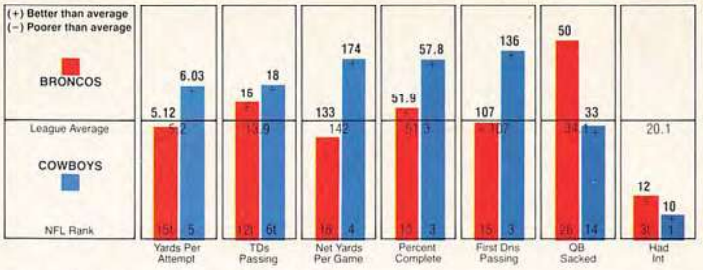
Receiving	No.	Yards	Avg.	Long	TDs
Odoms	37	429	11.6	33	3
Moses	27	539	20.0	35	4
Dolbin	26	443	17.0	81t	3
Armstrong	18	128	7.1	20	0
Lytle	17	198	11.6	47t	1
Upchurch	12	245	20.4	45	2
Keyworth	11	48	4.4	14	0
Perrin	6	106	17.8	41t	1
Jensen	4	63	15.8	34	0
Egloff	2	27	13.5	20	0
Kiick	2	14	7.0	11	0
Turner	1	25	25.0	25t	1

Morton found new career life in Denver.

Moses led Denver in receiving yardage.

Tight end Odoms has craft, speed, strength.

Dolbin's no giant but he's explosive.



Broncos' ability to protect Morton could be a factor.

Cowboys

The Cowboys' passing attack was second in the NFC, averaging 174.5 yards a game and 6.03 yards an attempt, statistics that most positively correlate to winning.

The heart of the passing game is Roger Staubach, who had an excellent year with 58 percent completions, 18 touchdowns, 2,620 yards, and the top efficiency rating in the NFC.

Staubach's strengths are a powerful, accurate arm, the ability to run when his receivers are covered (he gained 171 yards on 51 carries), and the fact that he is an extremely smart quarterback who runs Tom Landry's sophisticated offense with remarkable aplomb.

Landry calls all the plays from the side lines, using wide receivers—usually Golden Richards and Butch Johnson—as the messengers. Landry has developed a low-risk passing attack that favors simple patterns for the receivers.

Dallas is the only team in the NFL to employ the shotgun formation in isolated situations (usually on third-and-long and in two-minute offenses), which gives Staubach more time to study the defense and allows him an easy way to get a good deep-passing position. The Cowboys also employ a very effective shovel pass to the backs.

The patterns from the shotgun are basic ones but Landry and Staubach do like to use formations that isolate their receivers against certain defenders. They will vary the sets depending upon the situation.

During the season, Staubach had touchdown passes to nine different receivers. Four of his targets caught at least 28 balls.

Drew Pearson was the leader with 48 receptions for 870 yards, an 18.1-yard average, and two touchdowns.

Preston Pearson led NFC running backs with 46 catches and scored four times. Tony Dorsett had 29 receptions and rugged tight end Billy Joe DuPree had 28. Four other Cowboys were in double figures—Richards (17), Robert Newhouse (16), Johnson (12), and backup tight end Jay Saldi (11).

When the Cowboys get into third down passing situations, Preston Pearson becomes a key figure. He is the most likely candidate to be on the receiving end of a Staubach screen pass.

The elusive Drew Pearson no doubt will be seen running down the middle for a Staubach pass after going in motion from his wide receiver spot.

The Denver defense intercepted 25 passes this season but ranked only twelfth in the AFC against the pass. They are best characterized as bending but not breaking. Despite their average status against the pass, the Broncos still allowed the third fewest points in the NFL.

Passing	Att.	Comp.	Yards	Pct.	TDs	Int.	Rating
Staubach	361	210	2,620	58.2	18	9	87.1
White	10	4	35	40.0	0	1	45.8
Dorsett	1	1	34	100.0	0	0	—

Receiving	No.	Yards	Avg.	Long	TDs
D. Pearson	48	870	18.1	67	2
P. Pearson	46	535	11.6	36t	4
Dorsett	29	273	9.4	23	1
DuPree	28	347	12.4	23	3
Richards	17	225	13.2	50t	3
Newhouse	16	106	6.6	41	1
Johnson	12	135	11.3	22t	1
Saldi	11	108	9.8	23t	2
Laidlaw	5	60	12.0	18t	1
Hill	2	21	10.5	12	0
Dennison	1	9	9.0	9	0

Drew Pearson seals a touchdown with a spike.

The sun shines on Golden Richards.

Preston Pearson led NFC backs in receiving.

Roger Staubach is the leader of the offense.

Rushing Defense

Broncos

Year after year, the best football minds in the country have fits trying to cope with the constant shifts and slants of the Dallas Cowboys' offensive sets. It's difficult to adjust to all this movement without losing sight of the point of concentration, the ball carrier himself.

Dallas's shifting is basically time-buying, a device used primarily to take away the defense's ability to align itself properly. It's camouflage, and it gives Dallas a chance to consume several extra seconds before the play goes off.

Using its standard 3–4 setup, the Denver defense's first objective will be to confound Dallas's inside running attack. The time-worn "establish the running game" cliche is altogether applicable in Dallas's Super Bowl prognosis and the Broncos' answer to the old saw will depend on how well their seven front men can contain Tony Dorsett.

Stunting—using linebackers to compensate for the gaps left by the movement of the three down linemen—is the key to Denver's shutting down Dorsett. If an inside hole is threatened, the responsibilities of inside linebackers Randy Gradishar and Joe Rizzo become crucial. Gradishar played with an injured ankle in the AFC championship two weeks ago and can only benefit from the fortnight of rest. He and nose tackle Rubin Carter are two of the chief reasons why Denver led the NFL in 1977 with 3.26 yards allowed per rush.

Carter must face center John Fitzgerald, the league's best in the opinion of many observers. Right end Lyle Alzado lines up opposite Dallas's left offensive tackle Ralph Neely, who has been nursing a bad knee and will undergo his fourth operation when the season ends. Alzado should give Neely all he can handle.

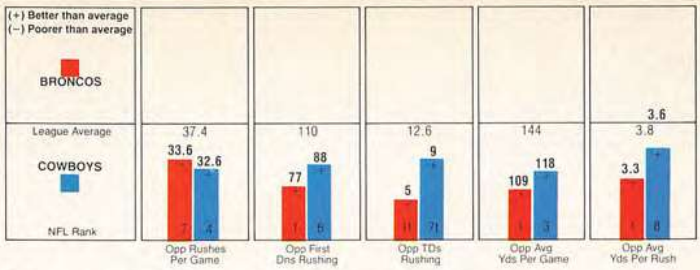
Defensive left end Barney Chavous goes against Dallas's right tackle, Pat Donovan, and here lies what is perhaps the matchup of the day in the interior line, a battle of Greco-Roman proportions.

Denver's outside linebackers are tough and extremely mobile. Bob Swenson, considered the quickest of the four-man crew, will have to deal with tight end Billy Joe DuPree. Since Tom Jackson presents basically the same problem at the right outside spot, Dallas is likely to counter with another tight end (Jay Saldi) when the situation dictates; the Cowboys also might use a wide receiver on that side to double up on Jackson. Should that occur, look for strong safety Bill Thompson, the nine-year veteran and Pro Bowl starter, to help out against the Cowboys' intermediate and deep routes.

Head coach Red Miller's experience with the 3–4 defense at New England followed him to Denver, where he now places great emphasis on the stunting and "scraping" style of filling the running routes. Against Oakland in the AFC championship game, Miller showed off one of the best weapons his defense has to offer: unit and situation substitutions in the defensive line. Here he can call on ends Brison Manor and Paul Smith and nose tackle John Grant. Grant was especially effective against the Raiders, coming up with two memorable hits in succession while the Super Bowl XI champions were struggling inside their own 10 yard line.

Lyle Alzado and friend combine to sack Chiefs' Mike Livingston.

San Francisco's Hofer learns the meaning of "Orange Crush."



Denver surrendered only five touchdowns on the ground.

Cowboys

Tom Landry was a defensive back in his playing days with the New York Giants. He later coached the secondary with the club before moving to Dallas as head coach.

Over the course of his career he has spent considerable amounts of time developing efficient devices to combat both the run and pass. He uses oddly staggered alignments and strange stances. The result has been almost total impenetrability.

That was never more evident than this season.

Very few teams have had success running the ball on the Cowboys. The statistics are proof: Dallas ranked first in the NFC against the rush, allowing a mere 117.9 yards per game and only 3.6 yards per rush.

These impressive numbers were accomplished with a disciplined unit that has size, speed, and desire.

There are two basic run defenses for the Cowboys.

One of the keys is the flexing of two of the four linemen—an end and a tackle—back off the ball. Since these linemen are back out of the initial thrust, they can move sideways well—once they are sure the play has gone away from them. And their flexed position also unsettles normal blocking angles an offense is used to.

The other variation of the flex has the tackles back off the ball. The ramifications of this formation are similar to the flexing of a tackle and end.

The success of this action depends upon the personnel—and the Cowboys have the players.

Intimidating Harvey Martin is the right end. His opposite number on the left side is Ed (Too Tall) Jones, another intimidating figure who stands 6 foot 9 inches and weighs 265 pounds.

The tackles are veteran Jethro Pugh and the versatile Randy White, who came to training camp penciled in as a starting linebacker but was shifted to the front four during preseason.

White is considered by many to be the best of the defensive linemen and has been likened to former all-pro Bob Lilly.

The backups—Larry Cole, Bill Gregory, and Dave Stalls—are rugged defenders. Cole and Gregory have been starters in the past.

The linebackers are outside men Thomas Henderson and D. D. Lewis, and Bob Breunig, who patrols the middle. Lewis will always line up on the weak side of the offense's formation. Henderson will have strongside responsibilities. He is extremely quick and a hard hitter. Breunig replaced 14-year veteran Lee Roy Jordan, who retired last year.

An aggressive group works the secondary. The cornerbacks are Benny Barnes and frenetic Aaron Kyle and they work with two of the game's best safeties, Charlie Waters and Cliff Harris.

Dallas deep backs are often asked to provide quick run support. Harris and Waters are savage tacklers who fill this requirement perfectly.

The Cowboys also will employ the 3–4 defense in certain situations; they used the alignment five times in their victory over the Broncos last December. The only personnel adjustment has White moving from his tackle post to linebacker.

Henderson and Pugh smother the Vikings' Miller. Bruenig dives on.

D. D. Lewis collars Franco Harris.

Passing Defense

Broncos

The prospect of lining up against Dallas's Roger Staubach is scary enough. Staubach has no peer when it comes to selection of receivers and improvisation when his primary receiver is covered.

For the Broncos' three down linemen, the first task is to keep Staubach in the pocket. That accomplished, the defense needs help in the middle to protect against Roger's scrambling prowess.

As with the constant shifting used to camouflage its rushing attack, Dallas employs a man in motion in an attempt to move the linebackers around. This is coupled with a low-risk passing attack and the result is narrow variety with plenty of window dressing in advance.

The Denver deep men will have to be especially aware of wide receiver Drew Pearson, Staubach's favorite target. The splintery one caught 48 balls for an 18.1-yard average in 1977. Pearson can come halfway down the line from his wide position, or all the way across. From the halfway trot, he can run a flat crossing pattern or a post-corner move. In either case, look for a lot of activity on the part of strong safety Bill Thompson and right cornerback Steve Foley.

Foley's performance against Oakland in the AFC championship game continued an already excellent season for the second-year ex-Tulane quarterback. He can go deep with an opponent's swiftest receiver.

Louis Wright, who was voted to this year's AFC Pro Bowl roster, may be the finest athlete among Denver's defensive backs. From the left corner, he can be expected to play man-to-man against Drew Pearson when Dallas uses Pearson on his frequently run deep crossing pattern.

Thompson, another Pro Bowler, is a solid performer who'll draw tight end Billy Joe DuPree. Thompson led the Broncos in interceptions this year with five, and his 24.4-yard return average is formidable. With Foley rotating to cover wide receiver Golden Richards and Thompson taking care of Pearson, Bernard Jackson, the free safety, is left to cover the deep zone.

The central figure in the drama of keeping Staubach in the pocket will be the Broncos' right defensive end, Lyle Alzado. Pass rushing is Alzado's forte, and since Denver is sparing in its use of the blitz, the veteran all-pro is the key man in the Denver charge.

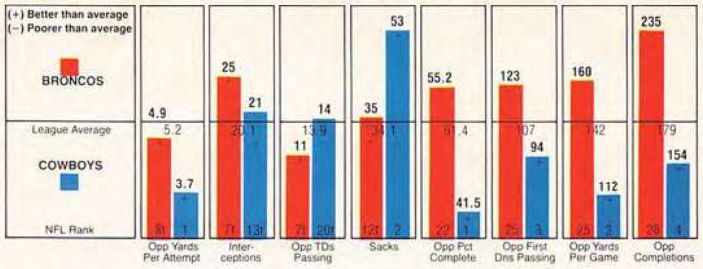
Staubach is less comfortable in the shotgun formation than in the conventional snap from center. If the Broncos can create enough long-distance passing situations, they'll have Staubach in a compromising position. But keep an eye out for some special offerings from coach Tom Landry's bag of tricks.

Dallas's shotgun on third-and-long situations is an attempt to squeeze in the three-man line and spread out the linebackers. Into this fertile area comes running back Preston Pearson to terrorize anyone in the middle zones.

Interceptions	No.	Yards	Avg.	Long	TDs
Thompson	5	122	24.4	38	0
T. Jackson	4	95	23.8	73t	1
Wright	3	128	42.7	59	1
Gradishar	3	56	18.7	28	0
Rizzo	3	49	16.3	38	0
Foley	3	22	7.3	11	0
B. Jackson	1	13	13.0	13	0
Smith	1	6	6.0	6	0
Evans	1	0	0.0	0	0
Swenson	1	0	0.0	0	0

Denver's pass rush takes pressure off the deep secondary.

Safety Steve Foley (43) is the junior member in Broncos' secondary.



Denver allowed more completions than any team in the NFL.

Cowboys

Dallas led the NFL in two important pass defense categories: lowest percentage of completions (41.5) and fewest yards allowed per pass attempt (3.68).

The reasons for the Cowboys' success are numerous, beginning with the front four.

Ends Harvey Martin and Ed (Too Tall) Jones and tackles Jethro Pugh and Randy White can bring havoc to any passing attack. They led the NFC in quarterback sacks (53), which would be a particularly alarming statistic to the Broncos since their quarterbacks were victimized 50 times, the high total among AFC teams.

Martin was a one-man wrecking crew. He was personally responsible for 23 of the sacks. He and Jones are the freewheeling types, White is extremely strong, and Pugh, who has been injured, adds his 13 years of experience to make a formidable quartet.

The Dallas linebacking corps offers a blend of youth and experience. D. D. Lewis, who will always line up at the weakside position, is a nine-year veteran.

Thomas Henderson is a mobile and fast strongside linebacker who returned an interception 79 yards for a touchdown against Tampa Bay.

Third-year man Bob Breunig inherited the middle linebacking slot that was held for 14 years by Lee Roy Jordan.

In Charlie Waters (strong) and Cliff Harris (free) the Cowboys have a safety tandem that may be the NFL's best. Harris led the interceptors with five and Waters added three.

The cornerbacks are Benny Barnes on the left and active second-year man Aaron Kyle on the right.

Mark Washington, Randy Hughes, and Mel Renfro each had two interceptions in backup roles.

On obvious passing downs the Cowboys have several substitution patterns. In the nickel defense Hughes moves in to replace Breunig, giving the Cowboys five deep backs. Dallas will blitz from this alignment and the front four is likely to engage in some stunting to confuse the blocking patterns of the offensive line.

Dallas also will go to six deep backs, inserting Hughes and Washington for Lewis and Breunig. The short backs will play man-for-man coverage on receivers and the two deep backs will zone the deep outside areas.

The Cowboys mix their coverages. They play variations of combination coverages and strongside zones.

NFC teams have found out that to beat Dallas they must throw the football. But there's a dilemma for the Broncos: they will have to throw into the teeth of the NFL's stingiest pass defense. The secondary consists of three men—Harris, Waters, and Barnes—who have played all four deep positions at one time or another during their careers. Kyle, the fourth back, is starting ahead of the more experienced Renfro (14 years) and Washington (8 years).

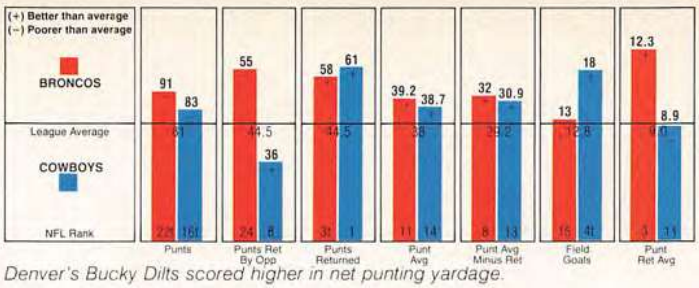
Interceptions	No.	Yards	Avg.	Long	TDs
Harris	5	7	1.4	7	0
Henderson	3	79	26.3	79t	1
Waters	3	11	3.7	6	0
Washington	2	32	16.0	21	0
Renfro	2	28	14.0	25	0
Hughes	2	19	9.5	11	0
Lewis	1	29	29.0	29	0
Breunig	1	15	15.0	15	0
Kyle	1	9	9.0	9	0
Hegman	1	0	0.0	0	0

Martin eyes another sack. He had 23.

Cliff Harris is key man in secondary.

Ed (Too Tall) Jones stands 6 foot 9 inches.

Kicking



Denver's Bucky Dilts scored higher in net punting yardage.

Broncos

First, an atmospheric note. Whereas Denver is known as the "Mile High City," New Orleans, according to the latest reports, sits at sea level. What's more, the air inside the Superdome is notoriously "dead" when it comes to supporting high punts or long field goals. In the former category, the Broncos may be in for some surprises.

Denver's punter, rookie Bucky Dilts, averaged 39.2 yards an attempt in 1977. In punting efficiency, he averaged 33.6 yards, eighth best in the NFL. His hang time is the important feature of his punts, which stay airborne between 4.5 and 5.0 seconds. Another plus for Dilts is that he's a left-footer and his punts present an altogether different aerodynamic look to return men.

Both Dilts and placekicker Jim Turner get their snaps from a reliable source, second-string center Bobby Maples.

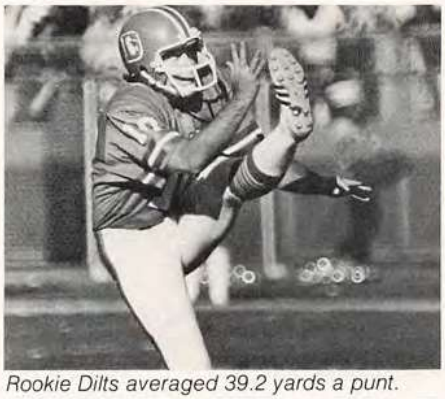
Though he missed one extra point attempt against Oakland in the AFC championship game, Turner was 31 for 34 in extra points during the regular season. He hit 13 of 19 field goal attempts, but the important statistics here are his 7 for 10 in the 30–39 yard range and 3 for 5 between the 40 and 49.

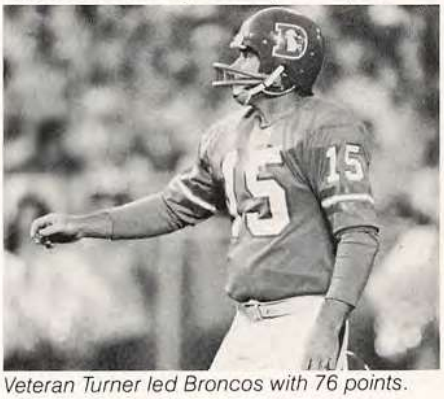
Returner Rick Upchurch can burn. He took 51 punts a total of 653 yards for a 12.8-yard average and averaged 22.8 yards on 20 kickoff returns. If there's a breakaway threat on today's special teams, it's Upchurch.

Punting	No.	Yards	Avg.	Touch-backs	Inside 20	Long
Dilts	90	3,525	39.2	5	20	63
Weese	1	38	38.0	0	0	38

Punt Returns	No.	FC	Yards	Avg.	Long	TDs
Upchurch	51	6	653	12.8	87t	1
Schultz	1	0	11	11.0	11	0
Pane	6	2	48	8.0	14	0

Kickoff Returns	No.	Yards	Avg.	Long	TDs
Perrin	3	72	24.0	32	0
Upchurch	20	456	22.8	32	0
Schultz	6	135	22.5	33	0
Pane	1	16	16.0	16	0
Keyworth	1	15	15.0	15	0
Hyde	1	15	15.0	15	0
Grant	1	8	8.0	8	0
Nairne	1	1	1.0	1	0
Dolbin	0	14	—	—	—


Rookie Dilts averaged 39.2 yards a punt.


Veteran Turner led Broncos with 76 points.

Cowboys

"Danny White can challenge [Oakland's] Ray Guy as the best punter in pro football," says coach Tom Landry.

White, who also is Roger Staubach's backup at quarterback, averaged 39.6 yards on 80 punts and had 25 inside the 20 yard line. Only 36 were returned, the second lowest total in the NFC. While his average does not place him among the league's elite punters—he was eighth in the NFC—his hang time limited opponents to an average of only 7.8 yards per return.

The placekicking duties are the responsibility of 5-foot 9-inch Efren Herrera, who was born in Guadalajara, Mexico, and came to the Cowboys as a free agent in 1974. He led NFC kickers in scoring with 93 points in 1977 and continued to show great marksmanship.

D.D. Lewis, the linebacker, snaps for all of White's punts, while Tom Rafferty is the center for kicks and field goals. The holder on kicks is sure-handed Charlie Waters.

Fearless Butch Johnson is the team's best returner. He averaged 24.4 yards on kickoffs and 8.5 on punts, ranking in the top seven in the National Conference in both categories.

Thomas Henderson, who has run a 9.5 in the 100-yard dash, performs on six of the seven Dallas special teams. A crushing tackle of Manfred Moore in the NFC title game caused a fumble that the Cowboys converted into a touchdown. Henderson also might be used on reverses on kickoffs; he went 97 yards for a touchdown in his rookie season.

Punting	No.	Yards	Avg.	Touch-backs	Inside 20	Long
White	80	3,171	39.6	10	25	57
Herrera	2	44	22.0	0	2	28

Punt Returns	No.	FC	Yards	Avg.	Long	TDs
Hill	10	1	124	12.4	29	0
Johnson	50	15	423	8.5	38	0
Harris	1	0	−2	−2.0	—	0

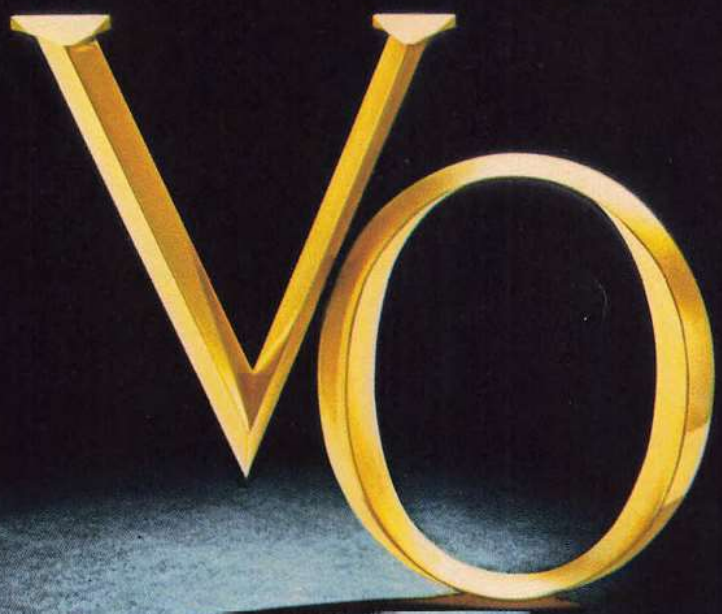
Kickoff Returns	No.	Yards	Avg.	Long	TDs
Dennison	1	30	30.0	30	0
Johnson	22	536	24.4	64	0
Brinson	17	409	24.1	41	0
Hill	3	64	21.3	29	0
Henderson	1	8	8.0	8	0
DuPree*	0	24	—	24	0

*Kickoff return following handoff.

Danny White punts, backs up Staubach.

Efren Herrera supplied the Cowboys 93 points.

Above the roaring crowd.



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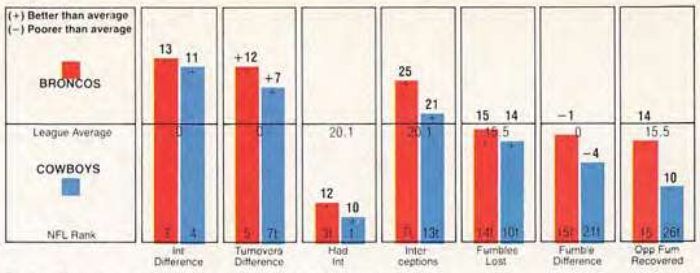
Turnovers



Both offensive units excel at avoiding interceptions.

Broncos

Those who studied instant replays of Tom Jackson during the 1977 season were treated to slow-motion dissections of such gems as his 73-yard return of an errant Bert Jones pass for a touchdown against Baltimore and his two acrobatic wonders in the playoff match with Pittsburgh.

But Jackson, while making the big turnovers look pedestrian, wasn't the team's leading interceptor. Bill Thompson had five for that honor, followed by Jackson with four. Left cornerback Louis Wright came up with three, as did right cornerback Steve Foley and linebackers Randy Gradishar and Joe Rizzo. But whereas Denver picked off 25 passes in 1977, Dallas's Roger Staubach threw a grand total of just nine interceptions.

Denver's Craig Morton was even better. Morton was intercepted a total of eight times all season, a scant 3.1 percent of his attempts. The Denver offensive unit was intercepted a total of 12 times in 1977 and managed to hold opponents to a total of 172 yards when they tried to run back those thefts. Add to this the statistic that shows no runbacks for touchdowns, and it can be said that the Denver offense, when the need arises, can play some good defense.

There's a statistic that probably will never be charted in the history of the National Football League, and that's "interceptions avoided." Morton's veteran status, not to mention his Super Bowl experience, should count for something here. His low interception numbers are partly attributable to a knack for dumping the ball or throwing it into the street when the receiver or receivers are covered. And don't discount the strength of tight end Riley Odoms when it comes to a situation that calls for batting away a ball that he can't control.

In the fumble column, the Broncos built an excellent record in 1977. They mishandled the ball 28 times and lost only 15. Conversely, however, their opponents dropped 28 and lost only 14.

In a game of inches it may be a turnover that tells whether the Broncos will reach the Super Bowl prize they've sought for a long, long time.

Broncos' 3-4 defense can create havoc.

Jackson intercepted two in playoff opener.

Cowboys

Dallas does well in the turnover statistics that matter most: the difference in the number of interceptions made as opposed to the number of interceptions thrown and the total number of turnovers taken away as opposed to the total number of turnovers given up.

The most impressive statistic was that quarterback Roger Staubach only had 9 of 361 attempts intercepted during the season (the team had 10). Staubach is a cagey veteran who knows when to dump the ball off if his receivers are covered and when to forsake the possibility of an interception altogether and run the ball.

The Cowboys' defense intercepted 21 passes, giving them a plus 11 in the overall evaluation of the category.

Ten different defenders collected the interceptions. Safety Cliff Harris, a feared defender, led with five. Linebacker Thomas Henderson and Harris's safety sidekick, Charlie Waters, each grabbed three. Henderson returned one of his for a 79-yard touchdown against Tampa Bay that he culminated with a leaping one-hand spike of the ball over the goal post crossbar.

Mark Washington, Mel Renfro, and Randy Hughes, who aren't in the starting lineup, had two interceptions each.

For all his brilliance this season, Tony Dorsett did show a propensity for fumbling. The Cowboys were guilty of 26 during the year and they lost 14 of them.

That statistic was nearly balanced by the defense, which picked up 10 fumbles by the opponent. Overall, Dallas was a plus seven in fumbles and interceptions.

The special teams, which answer to the old cliche of "agile, hostile, and mobile," are capable of turning the big play. A blocked punt was returned for a touchdown to beat the Eagles and Thomas Henderson's tackle of Minnesota's Manfred Moore in the title game led to Jay Saldi's fumble recovery that set up Dallas's last touchdown.

The point is that Dallas will try to capitalize on any give opportunity given to them. The Vikings know this all too well. All three touchdowns in the championship game came after fumble recoveries.

Charlie Waters excels at strong safety.

Thomas Henderson has range and speed.

The Coaches

Red Miller: impressive debut.

Robert (Red) Miller, Broncos

When he arrived in Denver to take the job as Broncos' head coach, Red Miller described the situation as "unique."

He characterized the 1976 Denver club, which finished 9-5 under John Ralston, as "peculiar... in that the Broncos were one of the league's highest scoring teams, but four of the touchdowns were scored by the punt return squad, four more by the defense on interceptions, and another two on fumble returns by the defense. That's over 25 percent of our scoring, and it's not realistic to expect that many points from those sources."

It was a natural statement, coming from the man who had built New England's offense into one of the most powerful units in the NFL during his four-year tenure as offensive coordinator under Chuck Fairbanks. Miller set about constructing a similar piece of machinery at Denver, and the result is present at the Superdome today: a club that won 12 of its 14 regular season games.

Prior to assuming his head coaching duties at Denver, Miller had coached 17 years in professional football. He wasn't a newcomer to the franchise, having served as the Broncos' offensive line coach from 1963–65 under head coaches Jack Faulkner and Mac Speedie. Miller has been an offensive line coach with four other teams: Boston Patriots, 1960–61; Buffalo Bills, 1962; St. Louis Cardinals, 1966–1970; and Baltimore Colts, 1971–72.

Miller played guard at Western Illinois from 1946 through 1949 and was named most valuable player for his last three years there. Before returning to Western Illinois, where he served as an assistant coach from 1953 through 1959, he coached high school teams in Astoria, Illinois, and Canton, Illinois, for three years.

Miller's staff includes Marv Braden, special teams; Joe Collier, defensive coordinator; Bob Gambold, defensive backfield; Ken Gray, offensive line; Stan Jones, defensive line; Myrel Moore, linebackers; Vito (Babe) Parilli, quarterbacks; Fran Polsfoot, receivers; and Paul Roach, offensive backfield.

Tom Landry: 18 seasons in Big D.

Tom Landry, Cowboys

Tom Landry went to training camp this year "scared to death." But that's nothing new. He has that fear every year.

"It keeps me on edge," he explains. "It makes me careful about evaluating what has happened in the past."

What has happened in the past has been remarkable. Only five coaches in the history of the NFL have won more games than Landry. It is a measure of his greatness to list those men: George Halas, Curly Lambeau, Paul Brown, Don Shula, and Steve Owen.

Landry has been the only coach in the Cowboys' 18-year history. His teams have posted a regular season record of 149-95-6 despite a 23-53-4 mark in the first six years.

Over the course of the last 12 seasons, the Cowboys have made the playoffs 11 times and compiled a mark of 124-42-4.

The Cowboys are making their fourth Super Bowl appearance—the others were in V, VI, and X—and won game VI with a 24–3 decision over Miami.

A native of Mission, Texas, Landry led the University of Texas to postseason victories in the 1948 Sugar Bowl and the 1949 Orange Bowl. He joined the New York Yankees in 1949 and gained a reputation as one of the headiest defensive backs in the National Football League, after moving to the Giants in 1950. In 1954 he began a two-year stint as player-coach and was named all-pro. He retired as a player after the 1955 season and was the Giants' defensive coach under Jim Lee Howell through 1959.

Over the years Landry has been characterized as lacking emotion. "I don't really show that much emotion—that's my side line image," he responds. "When I'm not thinking about football I'm as emotional as anyone else."

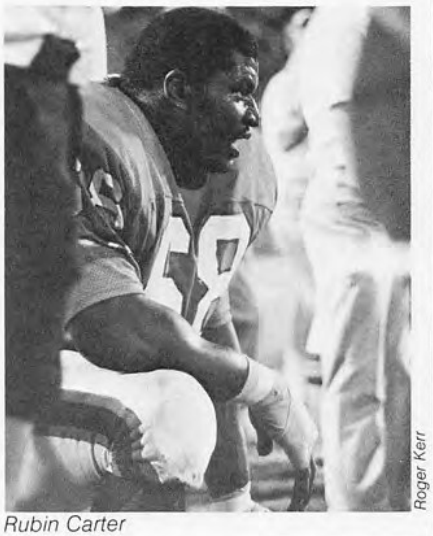
Landry's staff includes Ermal Allen, special assistant; Mike Ditka, special teams, receivers; Jim Myers, assistant head coach, offensive line; Dan Reeves, offensive coordinator, offensive backs; Gene Stallings, defensive backfield; Ernie Stautner, defensive coordinator, defensive line; Jerry Tubbs, linebackers; and Bob Ward, conditioning.

How They Were Built

Broncos

Year	Draft (21)	Trades (10)	Free Agents (13)
1968 *5-9-0* *4th, AFL West*	*DT* Paul Smith *(No. 9)*		
1969 *5-8-1* *4th, AFL West*	*S* Billy Thompson *(No. 3)*		
1970 *5-8-1* *4th, AFC West*			
1971 *4-9-1* *4th, AFC West*	*DE* Lyle Alzado *(No. 4A)*	*K* Jim Turner *(from N.Y. Jets)*	
1972 *5-9-0* *3rd, AFC West*	*TE* Riley Odoms *(No. 1)*	*C* Bobby Maples *(from Pittsburgh)* *WR* Haven Moses *(from Buffalo)*	
1973 *7-5-2* *T 2nd, AFC West*	*RB* Otis Armstrong *(No. 1)* *DE* Barney Chavos *(No. 2)* *G* Paul Howard *(No. 3A)* *LB* Tom Jackson *(No. 4)* *DT* John Grant *(No. 7B)*		
1974 *7-6-1* *2nd, AFC West*	*LB* Randy Gradishar *(No. 1)* *T* Claudie Minor *(No. 3)*	*RB* Jon Keyworth *(from Washington)*	*LB* Joe Rizzo
1975 *6-8-0* *2nd, AFC West*	*CB* Louis Wright *(No. 1)* *WR* Rick Upchurch *(No. 4B)* *DT* Rubin Carter *(No. 5B)* *CB* Steve Foley *(No. 8)*		*WR* Jack Dolbin *S* Randy Poltl *LB* Bob Swenson
1976 *9-5-0* *2nd, AFC West*	*G* Tom Glassic *(No. 1)* *QB* Craig Penrose *(No. 4)* *RB* Lonnie Perrin *(No. 5)* *LB* Larry Evans *(No. 14)*	*LB* Godwin Turk *(from N.Y. Jets)*	*T* Glenn Hyde **DE* Brison Manor *WR* John Schultz *QB* Norris Weese
1977 *14-2* *AFC Champions*	*G* Steve Schindler *(No. 1)* *RB* Rob Lytle *(No. 2)*	*S* Bernard Jackson *(from Cincinnati)* *RB* Jim Jensen *(from Dallas)* *T* Andy Maurer *(from San Francisco)* *C* Mike Montler *(from Buffalo)* *QB* Craig Morton *(from N.Y. Giants)*	*P* Bucky Dilts *TE* Ron Egloff *LB* Rob Nairne *S* Randy Rich *CB* Larry Riley

Waivers (1): T Henry Allison, 1977, from St. Louis.
*Manor was not active with the Broncos until 1977.


Roger Kerr
Rubin Carter

Carl Skalak, Jr.
Claudie Minor

Roger Kerr
Rick Upchurch

Cowboys

Year	Draft (35)	Trades (1)	Free Agents (9)
1963 *4-10-0* *5th, NFL East*			
1964 *5-8-1* *5th, NFL East*	*CB* Mel Renfro *(No. 2)* *QB* Roger Staubach *(No. 10)*		
1965 *7-7-0* *2nd, NFL East*	*DT* Jethro Pugh *(No. 11)*	*T* Ralph Neely *(from Baltimore)*	
1966 *10-3-1* *1st, NFL East*			
1967 *9-5-0* *1st, NFL Capitol*	*T* Rayfield Wright *(No. 7)*		
1968 *12-2-0* *1st, NFL Capitol*	*LB* D. D. Lewis *(No. 6)* *DT* Larry Cole *(No. 16)*		
1969 *11-2-1* *1st, NFL Capitol*			
1970 *10-4-0* *1st, NFC East*	*S* Charlie Waters *(No. 3A)* *C* John Fitzgerald *(No. 4)* *CB* Mark Washington *(No. 13)*		*S* Cliff Harris
1971 *11-3-0* *1st, NFC East*	*DT* Bill Gregory *(No. 13)*		
1972 *10-4-0* *2nd, NFC East*	*RB* Robert Newhouse *(No. 2A)*		*DB* Benny Barnes
1973 *10-4-0* *T 1st, NFC East*	*TE* Billy Joe DuPree *(No. 1)* *WR* Golden Richards *(No. 2)* *DE* Harvey Martin *(No. 3)*		*WR* Drew Pearson
1974 *8-6-0* *3rd, NFC East*	*DE* Ed Jones *(No. 1A)* **QB-P* Danny White *(No. 3A)*		*RB* Doug Dennison *K* Efren Herrera
1975 *12-4-0* *NFC Champions*	*LB* Randy White *(No. 1A)* *LB* Thomas Henderson *(No. 1B)* *G* Burton Lawless *(No. 2)* *LB* Bob Breunig *(No. 3)* *DE* Pat Donovan *(No. 4A)* *DB* Randy Hughes *(No. 4B)* *G* Herbert Scott *(No. 13)* *G* Scott Laidlaw *(No. 14)* **LB* Mike Hegman *(No. 7)*		*RB* Preston Pearson
1976 *11-3-0* *1st, NFC East*	*CB* Aaron Kyle *(No. 1)* *WR* Butch Johnson *(No. 3C)* *G-C* Tom Rafferty *(No. 4)*		*TE* Jay Saldi
1977 *14-2* *NFC Champions*	*RB* Tony Dorsett *(No. 1)* *QB* Glenn Carano *(No. 2)* *WR* Tony Hill *(No. 3A)* *LB* Guy Brown *(No. 4)* *T* Andy Frederick *(No. 5)* *T* Jim Cooper *(No. 6)* *DT-DE* David Stalls *(No. 7)*		*RB* Larry Brinson *LB* Bruce Huther

*White and Hegman were not active with Cowboys until 1976.

Bob Breunig

Billy Joe DuPree

Bill Gregory

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① **Standard MCA-Jet engine. 40 MPG highway, 29 MPG city.***
② Standard four-wheel coil suspension.
③ Standard radial-ply tires.
④ Standard cast-aluminum wheels.
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⑥ Standard five-speed manual transmission.
⑦ Standard floor console with rally gauges (tachometer, trip odometer, oil pressure, ammeter).
⑧ Standard overhead console with pivotal reading lights and digital clock.
⑨ Standard bucket seats (both reclining).
⑩ Standard tilt steering wheel.
⑪ Standard electric rear window defroster.
⑫ Standard dual outside mirrors (electronically controlled).
⑬ Standard power ventilation.
⑭ Standard tinted glass (all windows).
⑮ Standard interior trunk release.
⑯ Standard warning chimes (instead of buzzer).
⑰ Standard inside hood release.
⑱ Standard plaid cloth interior with carpeting.
⑲ Standard lighted door locks (outside).
⑳ Standard louvers (rear quarter windows).
㉑ Standard side-striping.
㉒ Standard locking gas cap.

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*EPA mileage estimates. Equipped with standard 1.6 litre engine, manual transmission, and 4.22 rear axle ratio. Your mileage may vary, according to your car's condition, equipment, and your driving habits. California mileage lower.

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Chairman

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President

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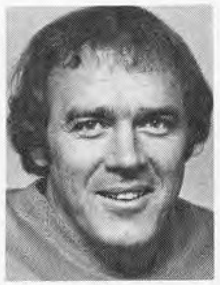
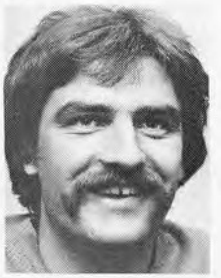
RED MILLER
Head Coach



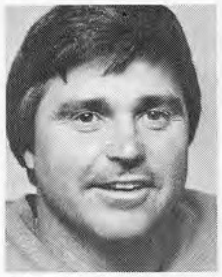
7 CRAIG MORTON
QB 6-4 213 33

10 BUCKY DILTS
P 5-9 190 24



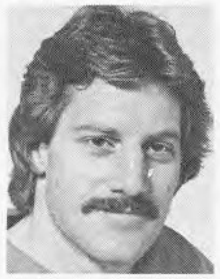
12 CRAIG PENROSE
QB 6-3 205 23

14 NORRIS WEESE
QB 6-1 193 25

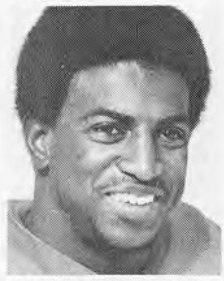


15 JIM TURNER
K 6-2 212 36

20 LOUIS WRIGHT
CB 6-2 195 23

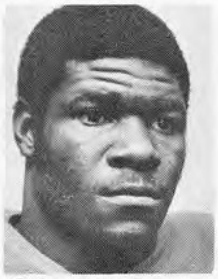


21 RANDY POLTL
S 6-2 188 24

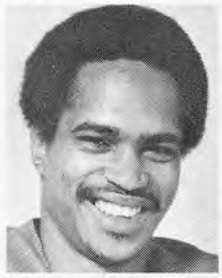


24 OTIS ARMSTRONG
RB 5-10 197 25

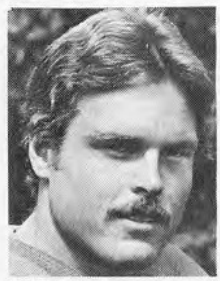
25 HAVEN MOSES
WR 6-2 200 30



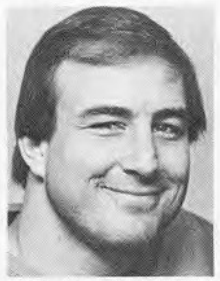
26 LARRY RILEY
CB 5-10 189 23



29 B. JACKSON
S 6-0 181 27



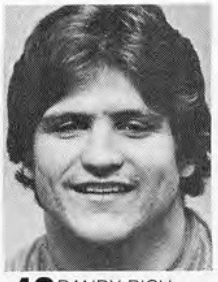
30 JIM JENSEN
RB 6-3 240 24



32 JON KEYWORTH
RB 6-3 234 27

35 LONNIE PERRIN
RB 6-1 224 25

36 BILLY THOMPSON
S 6-1 200 30



40 RANDY RICH
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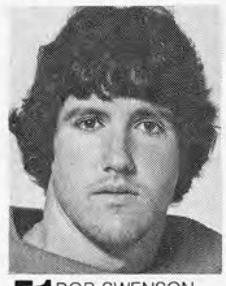
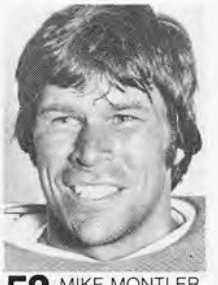
41 ROB LYTLE
RB 6-1 196 22

43 STEVE FOLEY
S 6-2 190 23

50 BOBBY MAPLES
C 6-3 250 35

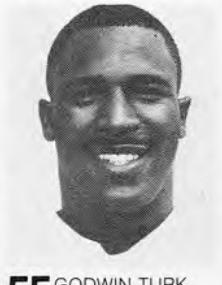


51 BOB SWENSON
LB 6-3 225 24



52 MIKE MONTLER
C 6-4 231 34

53 R. GRADISHAR
LB 6-3 224 25



55 GODWIN TURK
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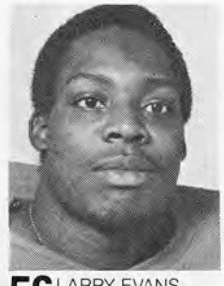
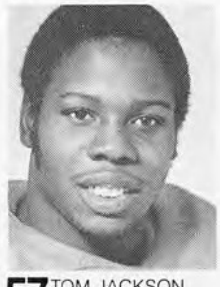
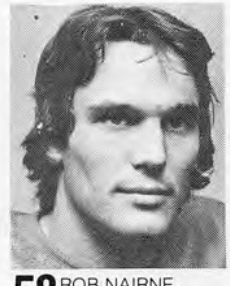


56 LARRY EVANS
LB 6-2 218 24



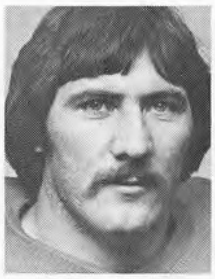
57 TOM JACKSON
LB 5-11 224 27



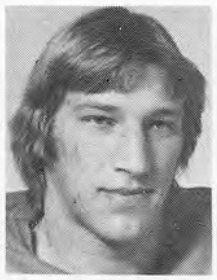
58 ROB NAIRNE
LB 6-4 220 23

Broncos

59 JOE RIZZO
LB 6-1 223 27

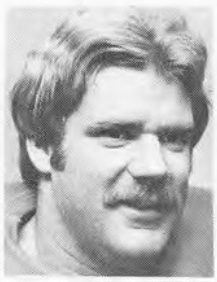


60 PAUL HOWARD
G 6-3 260 26



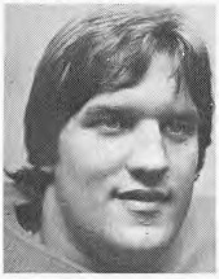
62 TOM GLASSIC
G 6-4 248 23

63 JOHN GRANT
DE 6-3 246 27

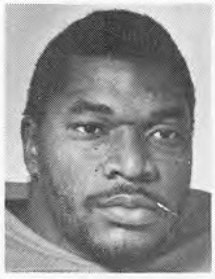


65 GLENN HYDE
OT 6-3 255 26

66 BRISON MANOR
DE 6-4 247 24



67 STEVE SCHINDLER
G 6-3 252 23



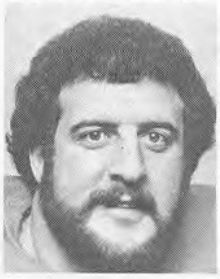
68 RUBIN CARTER
DT 6-0 254 25

70 PAUL SMITH
DT 6-3 250 31

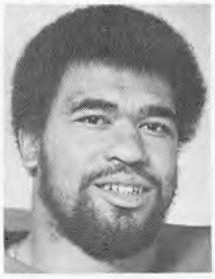
71 CLAUDIE MINOR
OT 6-4 280 26

73 HENRY ALLISON
OT 6-3 263 30

74 ANDY MAURER
OT 6-3 265 28



77 LYLE ALZADO
DE 6-3 250 28

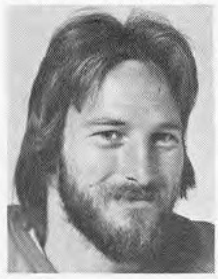


79 BARNEY CHAVOUS
DE 6-3 250 26

80 RICK UPCHURCH
WR 5-10 180 25

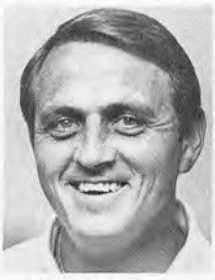
82 JACK DOLBIN
WR 5-10 183 28

85 RON EGLOFF
TE 6-5 227 21

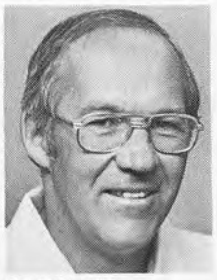


86 JOHN SCHULTZ
WR 5-10 183 24

88 RILEY ODOMS
TE 6-4 232 27

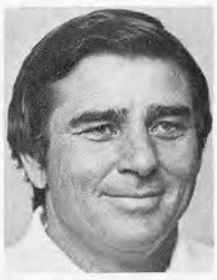


MARV BRADEN
Special Teams



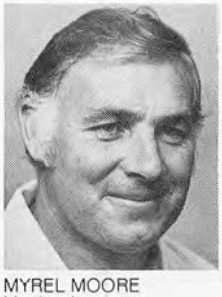
JOE COLLIER
Defensive Coordinator

BOB GAMBOLD
Defensive Backs



KEN GRAY
Offensive Line

STAN JONES
Defensive Line

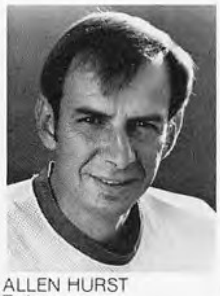


MYREL MOORE
Linebackers

BABE PARILLI
Quarterbacks

FRAN POLSFOOT
Wide Receivers

PAUL ROACH
Offensive Backfield



ALLEN HURST
Trainer

LARRY ELLIOTT
Equipment Manager

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Qty.	Team	Size

Broncos

ALPHABETICAL ROSTER

No.	Name	Pos.	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	NFL Exp.	College
77	Alzado, Lyle	DE	6-3	250	4/3/49	7	Yankton Col.
73	Allison, Henry	OT	6-3	263	2/11/47	5	San Diego St.
24	Armstrong, Otis	RB	5-10	197	11/15/50	5	Purdue
68	Carter, Rubin	DT	6-0	254	12/12/52	3	Miami
79	Chavous, Barney	DE	6-3	250	3/22/51	5	So. Carolina St.
10	Dilts, Bucky	P	5-9	190	12/6/53	R	Georgia
82	Dolbin, Jack	WR	5-10	183	10/12/48	3	Wake Forest
85	Egloff, Ron	TE	6-5	227	10/3/55	R	Wisconsin
56	Evans, Larry	LB	6-2	218	7/11/53	2	Miss. Col.
43	Foley, Steve	CB	6-2	190	11/11/53	2	Tulane
62	Glassic, Tom	G	6-4	248	4/17/54	2	Virginia
53	Gradishar, Randy	LB	6-3	231	3/3/52	4	Ohio St.
63	Grant, John	DT	6-3	246	6/28/50	5	So. California
60	Howard, Paul	G	6-3	260	9/12/50	4	Brigham Young
65	Hyde, Glenn	OT	6-3	255	3/14/51	4	Pittsburgh
29	Jackson, Bernard	S	6-0	181	8/24/50	6	Washington St.
57	Jackson, Tom	LB	5-11	224	4/4/51	5	Louisville
30	Jensen, Jim	RB	6-3	240	11/28/53	2	Iowa
32	Keyworth, Jon	RB	6-3	234	12/15/50	4	Colorado
41	Lytle, Rob	RB	6-1	198	11/12/54	R	Michigan
66	Manor, Brison	DE	6-4	247	8/20/52	1	Arkansas
50	Maples, Bobby	C	6-3	250	12/28/42	13	Baylor
74	Maurer, Andy	OT	6-3	265	9/30/48	8	Oregon
71	Minor, Claudie	OT	6-4	280	4/21/51	4	San Diego St.
52	Montler, Mike	C	6-4	250	1/10/44	9	Colorado
7	Morton, Craig	QB	6-4	213	2/5/43	13	California
25	Moses, Haven	WR	6-2	200	7/27/46	10	San Diego St.
58	Nairne, Rob	LB	6-4	220	3/24/54	R	Oregon St.
88	Odoms, Riley	TE	6-4	232	3/1/50	6	Houston
12	Penrose, Craig	QB	6-3	205	7/25/53	2	San Diego St.
35	Perrin, Lonnie	RB	6-1	224	2/3/52	2	Illinois
21	Poltl, Randy	S	6-3	188	3/26/52	4	Stanford
40	Rich, Randy	S	5-10	181	12/28/53	R	New Mexico
26	Riley, Larry	CB	5-10	189	11/21/54	R	Salem Col.
59	Rizzo, Joe	LB	6-1	223	12/17/50	4	Mer. Mar. Acad.
67	Schindler, Steve	G	6-3	252	7/24/54	R	Boston Col.
86	Schultz, John	WR	5-10	183	6/10/53	2	Maryland
70	Smith, Paul	DT	6-3	250	8/13/45	10	New Mexico
51	Swenson, Bob	LB	6-3	225	7/1/53	3	California
36	Thompson, Billy	S	6-1	200	10/10/46	9	Maryland St.
55	Turk, Godwin	LB	6-2	230	10/15/50	4	So. University
15	Turner, Jim	K	6-2	212	3/28/41	14	Utah St.
80	Upchurch, Rick	WR	5-10	180	5/20/54	3	Minnesota
14	Weese, Norris	QB	6-1	193	8/12/51	2	Mississippi
20	Wright, Louis	CB	6-2	195	1/31/53	3	San Jose St.

R—A first-year player who has not previously been in an NFL training camp.

THREE-DEEP LINEUPS

OFFENSE	**WR — 82 Jack Dolbin**	80 Rick Upchurch		
	LT — 74 Andy Maurer	73 Henry Allison		
	LG — 62 Tom Glassic	67 Steve Schindler		
	C — 52 Mike Montler	50 Bobby Maples		
	RG — 60 Paul Howard	67 Steve Schindler		
	RT — 71 Claudie Minor	65 Glenn Hyde		
	TE — 88 Riley Odoms	85 Ron Egloff		
	WR — 25 Haven Moses	86 John Schultz		
	QB — 7 Craig Morton	12 Craig Penrose	14 Norris Weese	
	RB — 24 Otis Armstrong	41 Rob Lytle		
	RB — 32 Jon Keyworth	35 Lonnie Perrin	30 Jim Jensen	
DEFENSE	**LE — 79 Barney Chavous**	66 Brison Manor		
	DT — 68 Rubin Carter	63 John Grant		
	RE — 77 Lyle Alzado	70 Paul Smith		
	LLB — 51 Bob Swenson	58 Rob Nairne		
	LLB — 59 Joe Rizzo	55 Godwin Turk		
	RLB — 53 Randy Gradishar	55 Godwin Turk		
	RLB — 57 Tom Jackson	56 Larry Evans		
	LCB — 20 Louis Wright	40 Randy Rich	26 Larry Riley	
	RCB — 43 Steve Foley	29 Bernard Jackson		
	SS — 36 Billy Thompson	21 Randy Poltl		
	WS — 29 Bernard Jackson	21 Randy Poltl		
SPECIALISTS	**P — 10 Bucky Dilts**			
	K — 15 Jim Turner			
	KO — 35 Lonnie Perrin			
	H — 14 Norris Weese			
	KC — 50 Bobby Maples	65 Glenn Hyde		
	KR — 80 Rick Upchurch	86 John Schultz		
	PR — 80 Rick Upchurch	36 Billy Thompson		

Bold Face—Starters

Panasonic introduces 24 ways to get hi-fi without the hassle.

Instead of a degree in engineering and a numbered Swiss bank account, now all you need to get great sound is Panasonic Matched Components. All the hi-fi components you'd ever want to match. Already matched.

There are four AM/FM stereo receivers. Including two with built-in 8 track. One with built-in cassette with Dolby* (shown below). And all with plenty of power. *Three systems with 12 watts and one with 25 watts per channel, minimum RMS into 8 ohms from 40Hz to 20kHz with no more than 0.8% total harmonic distortion.*

Thrusters. For an extra thrust of bass.

Choose either of our deluxe turntables. One is automatic return. The other plays up to 6 records automatically. Both with a sensitive magnetic cartridge to bring out the best in your records.

You also have a choice of three Thrusters™ speaker systems. All have a passive radiator speaker design. For that extra thrust of bass so important in today's music.

Duo-Cone headphones.

For private listening, put on our lightweight Duo-Cone headphones. Superb projection and carefully engineered tone balance for a natural sound.

Matched Components: Receivers, turntables and speakers. 24 different combinations that all say, "Hello, hi-fi. Goodbye, hassle."

*Dolby is a trademark of Dolby Laboratories, Inc. Cabinetry is simulated wood.

This is just one of them.

Matched Components

Panasonic

just slightly ahead of our time.

Broncos

OFFICIALS: 32 Jim Tunney, *Referee;* 57 Joe Connell, *Umpire;* 33 Art Holst, *Line Judge;* 36 Tony Veteri, *Head Linesman;* 5 Ray Douglas, *Back Judge;* 84 Bob Wortman, *Field Judge. Alternates:* 72 Cal Lepore; 20 Frank Sinkovitz.

OFFENSE

82	Jack Dolbin	WR
74	Andy Maurer	LT
62	Tom Glassic	LG
52	Mike Montler	C
60	Paul Howard	RG
71	Claudie Minor	RT
88	Riley Odoms	TE
25	Haven Moses	WR
7	Craig Morton	QB
24	Otis Armstrong	RB
32	Jon Keyworth	RB

DEFENSE

79	Barney Chavous	LE
68	Rubin Carter	NT
77	Lyle Alzado	RE
51	Bob Swenson	LLB
59	Joe Rizzo	LLB
53	Randy Gradishar	RLB
57	Tom Jackson	RLB
20	Louis Wright	LCB
43	Steve Foley	RCB
36	Billy Thompson	SS
29	Bernard Jackson	WS

NUMERICAL ROSTER

7	Morton, Craig	QB
10	Dilts, Bucky	P
12	Penrose, Craig	QB
14	Weese, Norris	QB
15	Turner, Jim	K
20	Wright, Louis	CB
21	Poltl, Randy	S
24	Armstrong, Otis	RB
25	Moses, Haven	WR
26	Riley, Larry	CB
29	Jackson, Bernard	S
30	Jensen, Jim	RB
32	Keyworth, Jon	RB
35	Perrin, Lonnie	RB
36	Thompson, Billy	S
40	Rich, Randy	S
41	Lytle, Rob	RB
43	Foley, Steve	S
50	Maples, Bobby	C
51	Swenson, Bob	LB
52	Montler, Mike	C
53	Gradishar, Randy	LB
55	Turk, Godwin	LB
56	Evans, Larry	LB
57	Jackson, Tom	LB
58	Nairne, Rob	LB
59	Rizzo, Joe	LB
60	Howard, Paul	G
62	Glassic, Tom	G
63	Grant, John	DE
65	Hyde, Glenn	OT
66	Manor, Brison	DE
67	Schindler, Steve	G
68	Carter, Rubin	DT
70	Smith, Paul	DT
71	Minor, Claudie	OT
73	Allison, Henry	OT
74	Maurer, Andy	OT
77	Alzado, Lyle	DE
79	Chavous, Barney	DE
80	Upchurch, Rick	WR
82	Dolbin, Jack	WR
85	Egloff, Ron	TE
86	Schultz, John	WR
88	Odoms, Riley	TE

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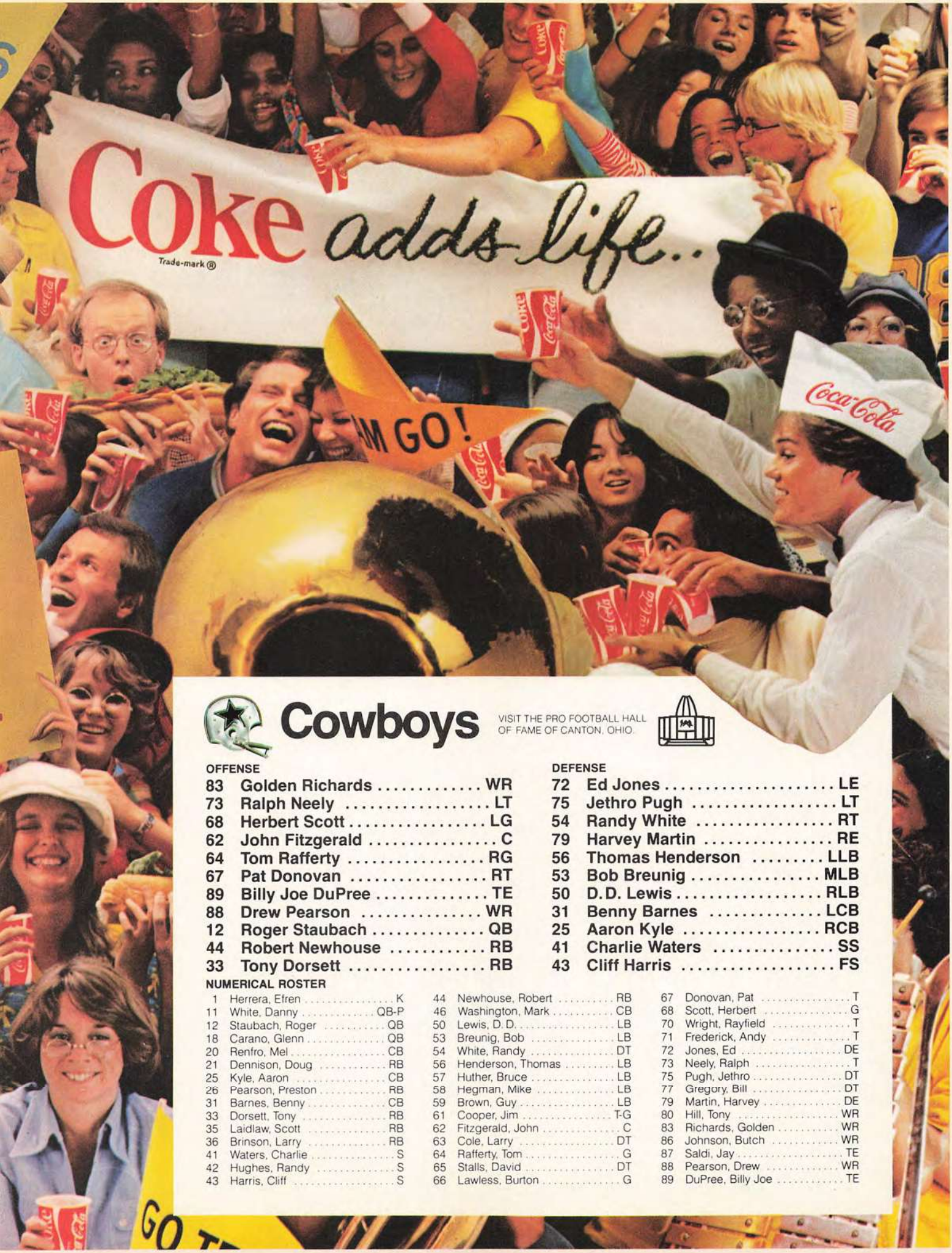

Cowboys

VISIT THE PRO FOOTBALL HALL OF FAME OF CANTON, OHIO.

OFFENSE

83	Golden Richards	WR
73	Ralph Neely	LT
68	Herbert Scott	LG
62	John Fitzgerald	C
64	Tom Rafferty	RG
67	Pat Donovan	RT
89	Billy Joe DuPree	TE
88	Drew Pearson	WR
12	Roger Staubach	QB
44	Robert Newhouse	RB
33	Tony Dorsett	RB

DEFENSE

72	Ed Jones	LE
75	Jethro Pugh	LT
54	Randy White	RT
79	Harvey Martin	RE
56	Thomas Henderson	LLB
53	Bob Breunig	MLB
50	D.D. Lewis	RLB
31	Benny Barnes	LCB
25	Aaron Kyle	RCB
41	Charlie Waters	SS
43	Cliff Harris	FS

NUMERICAL ROSTER

1	Herrera, Efren	K
11	White, Danny	QB-P
12	Staubach, Roger	QB
18	Carano, Glenn	QB
20	Renfro, Mel	CB
21	Dennison, Doug	RB
25	Kyle, Aaron	CB
26	Pearson, Preston	RB
31	Barnes, Benny	CB
33	Dorsett, Tony	RB
35	Laidlaw, Scott	RB
36	Brinson, Larry	RB
41	Waters, Charlie	S
42	Hughes, Randy	S
43	Harris, Cliff	S
44	Newhouse, Robert	RB
46	Washington, Mark	CB
50	Lewis, D.D.	LB
53	Breunig, Bob	LB
54	White, Randy	DT
56	Henderson, Thomas	LB
57	Huther, Bruce	LB
58	Hegman, Mike	LB
59	Brown, Guy	LB
61	Cooper, Jim	T-G
62	Fitzgerald, John	C
63	Cole, Larry	DT
64	Rafferty, Tom	G
65	Stalls, David	DT
66	Lawless, Burton	G
67	Donovan, Pat	T
68	Scott, Herbert	G
70	Wright, Rayfield	T
71	Frederick, Andy	T
72	Jones, Ed	DE
73	Neely, Ralph	T
75	Pugh, Jethro	DT
77	Gregory, Bill	DT
79	Martin, Harvey	DE
80	Hill, Tony	WR
83	Richards, Golden	WR
86	Johnson, Butch	WR
87	Saldi, Jay	TE
88	Pearson, Drew	WR
89	DuPree, Billy Joe	TE

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Cowboys

ALPHABETICAL ROSTER

No.	Name	Pos.	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	NFL Exp.	College
31	Barnes, Benny	CB	6–1	195	3/3/51	6	Stanford
53	Breunig, Bob	LB	6–2	227	7/4/53	3	Arizona State
36	Brinson, Larry	RB	6–0	214	6/6/54	R	Florida
59	Brown, Guy	LB	6–4	215	6/1/55	R	Houston
18	Carano, Glenn	QB	6–3	195	11/18/55	R	Nevada–Las Vegas
63	Cole, Larry	DT	6–5	260	11/15/46	10	Hawaii
61	Cooper, Jim	T-G	6–5	252	9/28/55	R	Temple
21	Dennison, Doug	RB	6–0	204	12/18/51	4	Kutztown State
67	Donovan, Pat	T	6–4	255	7/1/53	3	Stanford
33	Dorsett, Tony	RB	5–11	192	4/7/54	R	Pittsburgh
89	DuPree, Billy Joe	TE	6–4	226	3/7/50	5	Michigan State
62	Fitzgerald, John	C	6–5	260	4/16/48	7	Boston College
71	Frederick, Andy	T	6–6	241	9/25/54	R	New Mexico
77	Gregory, Bill	DT	6–5	260	12/14/49	7	Wisconsin
43	Harris, Cliff	S	6–1	192	11/12/48	8	Ouachita
58	Hegman, Mike	LB	6–1	225	1/17/53	2	Tennessee State
56	Henderson, Thomas	LB	6–2	220	3/1/53	3	Langston
1	Herrera, Efren	K	5–9	190	7/30/51	3	UCLA
80	Hill, Tony	WR	6–2	196	6/23/56	R	Stanford
42	Hughes, Randy	S	6–4	208	4/3/53	3	Oklahoma
57	Huther, Bruce	LB	6–1	217	7/23/54	R	New Hampshire
86	Johnson, Butch	WR	6–1	191	5/28/54	2	California–Riverside
72	Jones, Ed	DE	6–9	265	2/23/51	4	Tennessee State
25	Kyle, Aaron	CB	5–10	185	4/6/54	2	Wyoming
35	Laidlaw, Scott	RB	6–0	205	2/17/53	3	Stanford
66	Lawless, Burton	G	6–4	250	11/1/53	3	Florida
50	Lewis, D. D.	LB	6–1	215	10/16/45	9	Mississippi State
79	Martin, Harvey	DE	6–5	252	11/16/50	5	East Texas State
73	Neely, Ralph	T	6–6	255	9/12/43	13	Oklahoma
44	Newhouse, Robert	RB	5–10	205	1/9/50	6	Houston
88	Pearson, Drew	WR	6–0	183	1/12/51	5	Tulsa
26	Pearson, Preston	RB	6–1	206	1/17/45	11	Illinois
75	Pugh, Jethro	DT	6–6	250	7/3/44	13	Elizabeth City State
64	Rafferty, Tom	G-C	6–3	250	8/2/54	2	Penn State
20	Renfro, Mel	CB	6–0	192	12/30/41	14	Oregon
83	Richards, Golden	WR	6–0	180	12/31/50	5	Hawaii
87	Saldi, Jay	TE	6–3	224	10/8/54	2	South Carolina
68	Scott, Herbert	G	6–2	250	1/18/53	3	Virginia Union
65	Stalls, David	DT	6–4	236	9/19/55	R	Northern Colorado
12	Staubach, Roger	QB	6–3	202	2/5/42	9	Navy
46	Washington, Mark	CB	5–11	187	12/25/47	8	Morgan State
41	Waters, Charlie	S	6–2	198	9/10/48	8	Clemson
11	White, Danny	QB–P	6–2	192	2/9/52	3	Arizona State
54	White, Randy	DT	6–4	245	1/15/53	3	Maryland
70	Wright, Rayfield	T	6–6	260	8/23/45	11	Fort Valley State

R—A first-year player who has not previously been in an NFL training camp.

THREE-DEEP LINEUPS

OFFENSE	WR — 83 Golden Richards	86 Butch Johnson	80 Tony Hill
	LT — 73 Ralph Neely	71 Andy Frederick	67 Pat Donovan
	LG — 68 Herbert Scott	66 Burton Lawless	61 Jim Cooper
	C — 62 John Fitzgerald	64 Tom Rafferty	61 Jim Cooper
	RG — 64 Tom Rafferty	66 Burton Lawless	
	RT — 67 Pat Donovan	70 Rayfield Wright	71 Andy Frederick
	TE — 89 Billy Joe DuPree	87 Jay Saldi	
	WR — 88 Drew Pearson	80 Tony Hill	86 Butch Johnson
	QB — 12 Roger Staubach	11 Danny White	18 Glenn Carano
	RB — 33 Tony Dorsett	26 Preston Pearson	21 Doug Dennison
	RB — 44 Robert Newhouse	35 Scott Laidlaw	36 Larry Brinson
DEFENSE	LE — 72 Ed Jones	63 Larry Cole	65 David Stalls
	LT — 75 Jethro Pugh	77 Bill Gregory	63 Larry Cole
	RT — 54 Randy White	63 Larry Cole	77 Bill Gregory
	RE — 79 Harvey Martin	63 Larry Cole	65 David Stalls
	LLB — 56 Thomas Henderson	58 Mike Hegman	59 Guy Brown
	MLB — 53 Bob Breunig	57 Bruce Huther	50 D. D. Lewis
	RLB — 50 D. D. Lewis	58 Mike Hegman	59 Guy Brown
	LCB — 31 Benny Barnes	46 Mark Washington	20 Mel Renfro
	RCB — 25 Aaron Kyle	20 Mel Renfro	46 Mark Washington
	SS — 41 Charlie Waters	42 Randy Hughes	31 Benny Barnes
	FS — 43 Cliff Harris	42 Randy Hughes	31 Benny Barnes
SPECIALISTS	P — 11 Danny White	1 Efren Herrera	
	K — 1 Efren Herrera	11 Danny White	
	H — 41 Charlie Waters	11 Danny White	18 Glenn Carano
	PR — 86 Butch Johnson	80 Tony Hill	43 Cliff Harris
	KOR — 86 Butch Johnson	36 Larry Brinson	21 Doug Dennison 80 Tony Hill
	PC — 50 D. D. Lewis	64 Tom Rafferty	
	KC — 64 Tom Rafferty	50 D. D. Lewis	

Bold Face—Starters

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Futura is a car engineered to hold down the costs of maintenance. Ford estimates that with automatic transmission and Futura's standard engine, 50,000 miles of scheduled maintenance will cost only about $150. (*Based on Ford labor time standards, a $14.50/hour labor rate and Ford's suggested parts prices in effect Aug., 1977.)

33 MPG (hwy) 23 MPG (city)

Futura's EPA mileage estimates—with 2.3 litre engine and manual 4-speed—are the highest of any car in its class. Of course, your actual mileage may vary depending on how you drive, your car's condition and optional equipment. Calif. ratings are lower. Futura is also available with 3.3 litre 6-cylinder and 5.0 litre V-8 engines.

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FORD DIVISION

Ford 75th ANNIVERSARY

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Chairman of Board

TEX SCHRAMM
President-G.M.

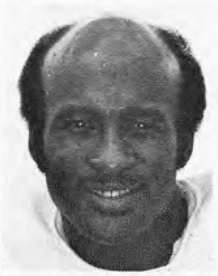
TOM LANDRY
Head Coach

1 EFREN HERRERA
K 5-9 190 26

11 DANNY WHITE
QB-P 6-2 192 25

12 ROGER STAUBACH
QB 6-3 202 35

18 GLENN CARANO
QB 6-3 195 22



20 MEL RENFRO
CB 6-0 192 36

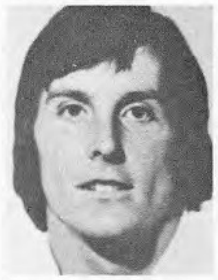
21 DOUG DENNISON
RB 6-0 204 26

25 AARON KYLE
CB 5-10 185 23

26 P. PEARSON
RB 6-1 206 32

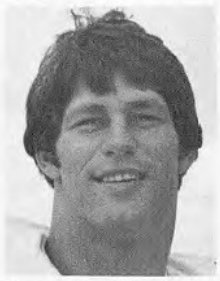
31 BENNY BARNES
CB 6-1 195 26

33 TONY DORSETT
RB 5-11 192 23



35 SCOTT LAIDLAW
RB 6-0 205 24

36 LARRY BRINSON
RB 6-0 214 23



41 CHARLIE WATERS
S 6-2 198 29

42 RANDY HUGHES
S 6-4 208 24

43 CLIFF HARRIS
S 6-1 192 29

44 R. NEWHOUSE
RB 5-10 205 28

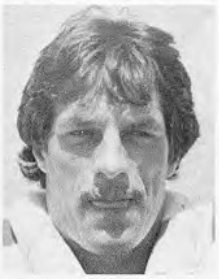
46 M. WASHINGTON
CB 5-11 187 30

50 D. D. LEWIS
LB 6-1 215 32

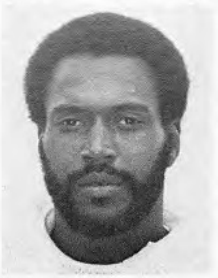
53 BOB BREUNIG
LB 6-2 227 24

54 RANDY WHITE
DT 6-4 245 25

56 T. HENDERSON
LB 6-2 220 24



57 BRUCE HUTHER
LB 6-1 217 23



58 MIKE HEGMAN
LB 6-1 225 24

59 GUY BROWN
LB 6-4 215 22

61 JIM COOPER
OT-G 6-5 252 22

62 JOHN FITZGERALD
C 6-5 260 29

63 LARRY COLE
DT-DE 6-5 260 31

Cowboys

64 TOM RAFFERTY
G-C 6-3 250 23

65 DAVID STALLS
DT-DE 6-4 236 22

66 BURTON LAWLESS
G 6-4 250 24

67 PAT DONOVAN
OT 6-4 255 24

68 HERBERT SCOTT
G 6-2 250 24

70 RAYFIELD WRIGHT
OT 6-6 260 32

71 ANDY FREDERICK
OT 6-6 241 23

72 ED JONES
DE 6-9 265 26

73 RALPH NEELY
OT 6-6 255 34

75 JETHRO PUGH
DT 6-6 250 33

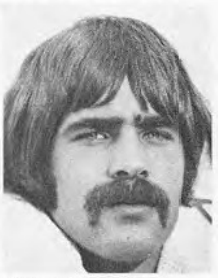
77 BILL GREGORY
DT 6-5 260 28

79 HARVEY MARTIN
DE 6-5 252 27

80 TONY HILL
WR 6-2 196 21

83 G. RICHARDS
WR 6-0 180 26

86 BUTCH JOHNSON
WR 6-1 191 23

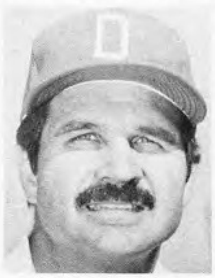


87 JAY SALDI
TE 6-3 224 23

88 DREW PEARSON
WR 6-0 183 26

89 BILLY JOE DUPREE
TE 6-4 226 27

ERMAL ALLEN
Special Assistant



MIKE DITKA
Receivers

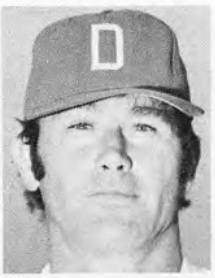
JIM MYERS
Offensive Line

DAN REEVES
Offensive Backfield

GENE STALLINGS
Defensive Backs

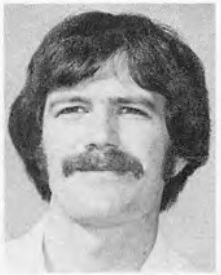
ERNIE STAUTNER
Defensive Line

JERRY TUBBS
Linebackers



BOB WARD
Conditioning

DON COCHREN
Trainer



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BUCK BUCHANAN
Equipment Manager

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The 58th Year

By Ted Brock

The following 32 pages contain an illustrated summary of the National Football League's 1977 season. If you're reading this in the Superdome on Sunday, January 15, 1978, it might be a good idea to skip to page 116 . . . unless you've got an hour or two before game time. The 16 weeks of reading and looking are for a less hectic setting.

It's been a year of transition for the NFL. Before you cast off the word "transition" as just another easy cliche, consider that on Sunday, December 4, 1977, in Kansas City's Arrowhead Stadium, the Cincinnati Bengals and the Kansas City Chiefs played the 5,000th game in the history of the league.

The statistic sits there, smack in the middle of middle America, just waiting to be analyzed and glorified until the page crumples under the weight of so many superlatives. Yet nobody says much more than, "That's a hell of a lot of games." Given the chance to ogle itself in the mirror, pro football, age 58, takes a quick look, says, "Be flexible and you'll live to be 59," and starts working on its second 5,000 games.

Next season the NFL moves toward enhancing its competitive flavor by balancing the schedules of the 28 teams and adding two regular season games to bring the total to 16. A look at next year's AFC and NFC matchups, derived from a formula based on the teams' standings in the previous year, appears on pages 33 and 34.

In 1977, the two conferences reflected the phenomena that led to the change. In the NFC, the powerhouses persisted. Dallas, Los Angeles, and Minnesota, the familiar front runners, were the intimidators once again. But the AFC showed what the league can be: a continual scramble with new claims to leadership being laid every week. World champion Oakland learned this early on, as AFC West rival Denver arose and began putting together the best record in the 18-year history of the franchise. In the Central Division, too, the situation was laced with uncertainty. Before the ninth week, for example, there was a good possiblility that all four teams might come out tied for first with 5–4 records. And in the Eastern Division, just as it appeared that New England was ready to take command, Miami regained the explosiveness it had known in the early seventies and both the Dolphins and Patriots set about chasing the Baltimore Colts.

When the season began, all eyes and cameras were trained on rookie running backs Ricky Bell of Tampa Bay and Heisman trophy winner Tony Dorsett of Dallas. Bell struggled behind the Buccaneers' overmatched offensive line, while Dorsett eased into the Cowboys' clockwork with all the promise of superstardom, e.g. a 77-yard touchdown run against St. Louis in the fourth week.

Defensively, the rookies who drew the most attention were tackle A. J. Duhe and end Bob Baumhower, who doublehandedly took over two-thirds of the Dolphins' front three.

And the mantle of Superstar-in-Residence passed from Buffalo's O.J. Simpson to Chicago's Walter Payton. Against Minnesota in the ninth week, Payton rushed for 275 yards to rub out Simpson's year-old single game mark of 273. Simpson, meanwhile, was recovering from knee surgery that threatened to cut short his career.

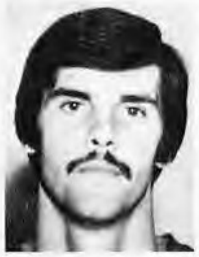
Are there more nominations for ingredients to be added to the time capsule? Turn the page(s) and select the highlights. But do it at your own risk. If you're buried in the numbers for the sixth week when the kickoff for Super Bowl XII takes place, don't say you weren't forewarned.

Week 1

The First Week, September 18, 1977

People

Greg Coleman
Cleveland
A rookie punter who had gotten his chance when highly touted Tom Skladany did not report, Coleman averaged 47.7 gross yards on six punts in Cleveland's victory over Cincinnati. The Bengals had cut Coleman during training camp the year before.



Jerry Golsteyn
New York Giants
The Giants' new starting quarterback threw a touchdown pass to Gary Shirk with 1:56 to play, and Joe Danelo kicked a 30-yard field goal with three seconds left as the Giants handed Washington coach George Allen his first opening-day defeat 20–17.

Randy Gradishar
Denver
A Colorado state record crowd of 75,002 watched in remodeled Mile High Stadium as the Broncos' "Orange Crush" defense, led by middle linebacker Gradishar, who made 10 unassisted tackles, shut out the usually potent St. Louis offense and won 7–0.

Willard Harrell
Green Bay
A Louisiana Superdome audience was dazzled as Harrell and his Green Bay blockers worked together perfectly for a 75-yard touchdown on a punt return in the first quarter. The Packers held off a late Saints' rally and won 24–20.

Keith Krepfle
Philadelphia
Krepfle (pronounced Creffle) helped Eagles' fans forget the loss of tight end Charles Young to Los Angeles, catching four passes, all for first downs and one of them a touchdown, in Philadelphia's victory over Tampa Bay. The Eagles won 13–3.

Ray Pinney
Pittsburgh
An obscure substitute at tackle for Pittsburgh, he started in place of the injured Jon Kolb and did a good job holding speedy defensive end Cedrick Hardman in check as the Steelers stopped San Francisco 27–0 on Monday night television.

Reflections

It was the beginning of a pivotal, even historic season in the National Football League. Cincinnati, Denver, New England, and New Orleans had won the most games in the last six-game preseason (each was 5–1; defending Super Bowl champion Oakland had actually lost two preseason games, to the mild surprise of everyone). Now the NFL launched its last 14-game regular season.

The most talked-about individuals were quarterback Joe Namath and running back Tony Dorsett. Namath had exchanged the uniform of the New York Jets for that of the Los Angeles Rams, and Dorsett was the Heisman trophy winner and closely-watched top draft choice of the Dallas Cowboys; reporters had dogged his every step at the Cowboys' training camp in Thousand Oaks, California.

Neither Namath nor Dorsett got off to a very good start. The Atlanta Falcons threw linebacker and safety blitzes, and sometimes a nine-man rush, at Namath and took advantage of Los Angeles fumbles for a surprising 17–6 victory on opening day. Namath still managed to complete 15 of 31 passes for 141 yards and threw up a flurry of them in the last quarter in a vain attempt to catch up.

Atlanta's upset was engineered by rookie head coach Leeman Bennett, a Rams' assistant a year earlier, and quarterback Scott Hunter, substituting for the injured Steve Bartkowski. Like Namath, Hunter was a product of the University of Alabama.

"I was pulling for him," Namath said, "but not for him to beat us."

Dorsett could only watch as Preston Pearson started ahead of him in the Dallas backfield in a big game at Minnesota. Dorsett eventually got into the game but gained only 11 yards on four carries. The Cowboys won 16–10 in sudden death overtime, on a four-yard run by that old show-stopper, quarterback Roger Staubach. He finished the day with 21 yards rushing.

Football and Ohio are like butter and toast and this season was shaping up to be a most interesting one in the Buckeye state. The Cincinnati Bengals had added giant tackles Eddie Edwards and Wilson Whitley to their defensive line to join super-sacker Coy Bacon and 1976 all-rookie end Gary Burley. The Bengals hoped improvement in their pass rush would be the ingredient to get them an AFC Central Division championship.

The Cleveland Browns, their opposition on opening day, were without all-pro defensive tackle Jerry Sherk, who was injured, but he was replaced by 6-foot 5-inch rookie Mickey Sims, who helped the Browns apply the NFL's penchant for height to the extreme; all Cleveland's defensive linemen and starting offensive guards and tackles ranged from 6 foot 5 to 6 foot 7 inches, a virtual thicket of big men up front.

The Browns also were without wide receiver Paul Warfield, but his replacement was the extraordinary young athlete, Dave Logan, a second-year man in the NFL who had been drafted in three professional sports—football, baseball, and basketball—out of the University of Colorado.

Living a Nightmare

Cincinnati dominated the Browns on the opening series. Bacon stopped running back Greg Pruitt for a two-yard loss. On the next play, Bacon sacked Cleveland's gutty quarterback, Brian Sipe, for a seven-yard setback.

"It was a nightmare situation," Sipe said later. "Third and nineteen from your own three-yard line. I'm not saying we would have lost if we hadn't gotten anything from that possession, but when you get pushed around like that right away, you have a lot of question marks in your mind when you leave the field."

Cincinnati may have appeared to be in command, but Sipe is a young man with the looks of a clothes model and the courage of a Macedonian warrior. On the third play, he combined with Logan for a 42-yard pass completion. From there, the Browns went on to a Don Cockroft field goal and, eventually, a 13–3 upset of the Bengals.

Their lukewarm preseason now only a memory, the Oakland Raiders shut out the San Diego Chargers 24–0 to get the regular season off in a big way. Quarterback Ken Stabler threw touchdown passes to wide receiver Cliff Branch and tight end Dave Casper, and the Raiders took advantage of three Chargers' mistakes and turned them into touchdowns. And Oakland's vaunted defense held James Harris, San Diego's new quarterback, to only 62 yards passing. Johnny Rodgers, another Chargers' newcomer, also had a bad debut, fumbling a punt to get up a Raiders' touchdown.

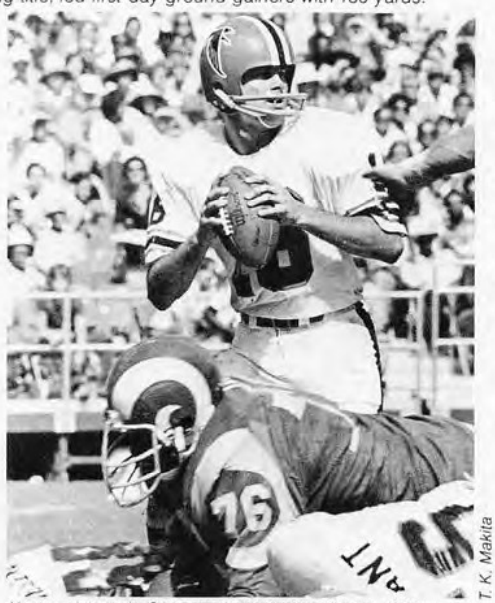
"Last year was the first season we won an opener in a long time and good things followed," coach John Madden of the Raiders said afterwards in the locker room. "Maybe it's an omen."

Chicago's Walter Payton scales a small mountain of Lions and Bears during 30–20 opening day victory over Detroit. Payton, runner-up to O.J. Simpson for 1976 rushing title, led first-day ground gainers with 160 yards.

Don Lansu

Above, Chargers' Johnny Rodgers fumbles punt in 16–0 loss to Oakland. Below, O.J. skids in rain.

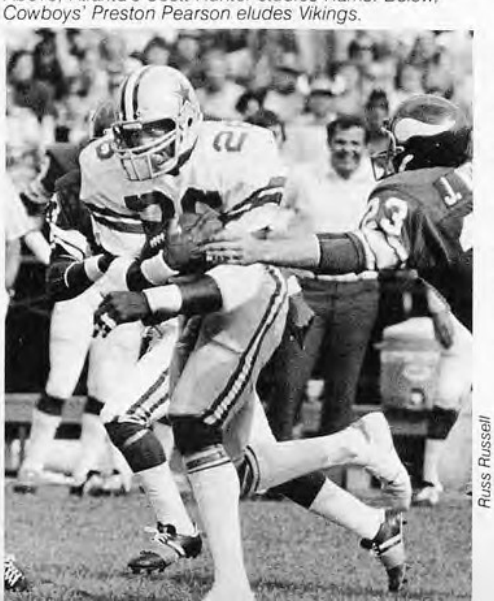
Mike Spinelli



Above, Atlanta's Scott Hunter studies Rams. Below, Cowboys' Preston Pearson eludes Vikings.

T. K. Makita

Dave Cross



Russ Russell

Numbers

Standings

AFC East	W	L	T	Pct.	Pts.	OP
Baltimore	1	0	0	1.000	29	14
New England	1	0	0	1.000	21	17
Miami	1	0	0	1.000	13	0
Buffalo	0	1	0	.000	0	13
N.Y. Jets	0	1	0	.000	0	20
AFC Central						
Cleveland	1	0	0	1.000	13	3
Pittsburgh	1	0	0	1.000	27	0
Houston	1	0	0	1.000	20	0
Cincinnati	0	1	0	.000	3	13
AFC West						
Oakland	1	0	0	1.000	24	0
Denver	1	0	0	1.000	7	0
Kansas City	0	1	0	.000	17	21
Seattle	0	1	0	.000	14	29
San Diego	0	1	0	.000	0	24
NFC East	**W**	**L**	**T**	**Pct.**	**Pts.**	**OP**
Dallas	1	0	0	1.000	16	10
N.Y. Giants	1	0	0	1.000	20	17
Philadelphia	1	0	0	1.000	13	3
Washington	0	1	0	.000	17	20
St. Louis	0	1	0	.000	0	7
NFC Central						
Chicago	1	0	0	1.000	30	20
Green Bay	1	0	0	1.000	24	20
Minnesota	0	1	0	.000	10	16
Detroit	0	1	0	.000	20	30
Tampa Bay	0	1	0	.000	3	13
NFC West						
Atlanta	1	0	0	1.000	17	6
New Orleans	0	1	0	.000	20	24
Los Angeles	0	1	0	.000	6	17
San Francisco	0	1	0	.000	0	27

Scores

American Football Conference
Baltimore 29, Seattle 14
Cleveland 13, Cincinnati 3
Houston 20, New York Jets 0
Miami 13, Buffalo 0
New England 21, Kansas City 17
Oakland 24, San Diego 0

National Football Conference
Atlanta 17, Los Angeles 6
Chicago 30, Detroit 20
Dallas 16, Minnesota 10, overtime
Green Bay 24, New Orleans 20
New York Giants 20, Washington 17
Philadelphia 13, Tampa Bay 3

Interconference Games
Denver 7, St. Louis 0
Pittsburgh 27, San Francisco 0
AFC, 2 victories.

Newsmakers

The NFL's rushing champion four of the last five seasons, **O.J. Simpson** of Buffalo, was held to 71 yards. Chicago's **Walter Payton,** the runner-up in 1976, led all first-week rushes with 160 yards. Others with 100 or more were Baltimore's **Lydell Mitchell** (114), New England's **Sam Cunningham** (105), and Pittsburgh's **Franco Harris** (100), all in victories.

Detroit's **Greg Landry** hit 17 of 25 passes for 239 yards, but Chicago won anyway. **Ron Jaworski,** in his debut with Philadelphia, completed 14 of 24.

Three running backs were the leading receivers. O.J. caught seven passes for 68 yards, **Don McCauley** of Baltimore and **Terry Metcalf** of St. Louis each grabbed six.

Week 2

The Second Week, September 25, 1977

People

Willie Alexander
Houston
The Oilers' were backed to their own 9 with 4:55 to play and the score tied 10–10. Quarterback Lynn Dickey of Green Bay passed and it was tipped by an Oiler and then picked off by Alexander, who sped 95 yards for a touchdown to win the game 16–10.

Pat Fischer
Washington
Beset by injuries but still game, Fischer got his 37-year-old bones moving and reclaimed his starting left cornerback position as Washington defeated Atlanta 10–6 for its first victory. Fischer has been playing cornerback in the NFL for 17 years.

Leroy Jones
San Diego
Jones, a 6-foot 8-inch, 274-pound defensive end, intercepted a Kansas City pass, began running the wrong way, then reversed his field and bulled in for a 17-yard touchdown. "Don't call me 'Wrong-Way Jones,'" he said. "I was just setting up my blockers."

Nat Moore
Miami
An unstoppable one-man team against San Francisco, Moore caught a 32-yard screen pass for a touchdown while playing running back, moved to tight end and caught a 73-yard touchdown pass, and scored a third time from 19 on a wide receiver reverse.

Charlie Sanders
Detroit
A Transcutaneous Nerve Stimulator which allowed Sanders to play despite a pulled hamstring injury, the 10-year veteran tight end from Minnesota made his three hundred twenty-sixth pass reception, a club record, as the Lions beat New Orleans 23–19.

Pat Toomay
Oakland
The author of *The Crunch* and of numerous quarterback sackings for Dallas, Buffalo, Tampa Bay, and now Oakland, Toomay is only a substitute but starred in the Raiders' big victory over Pittsburgh. He had three quarterback sacks for 32 yards in losses.

Reflections

Vince Lombardi called Forrest Gregg "the finest player I ever coached." Considering all the great athletes who played for Lombardi, the statement was an extraordinary, almost staggering compliment to pay to the former Green Bay Packers and Dallas Cowboys tackle, who was inducted into the Pro Football Hall of Fame in July, 1977.

As the second week of the National Football League season commenced, the Cleveland Browns, whom Gregg now coaches, posted a second consecutive surprise victory, this time over the New England Patriots. It was a dramatic game in which the Browns came from behind to tie the score twice and then won 30–27 in sudden death on Don Cockroft's 35-yard field goal. Earlier, the Patriots provided heroics of their own, with Steve Grogan throwing clutch passes to tight end Russ Francis and John Smith kicking a 28-yard field goal as time ran out to force sudden death.

A small, exclusive fraternity of men are unhesitatingly called "great coaches" in the NFL. Pro football and its followers award that label reluctantly and usually only after many years have passed and the candidate has demonstrated unassailable credentials.

But as Gregg and the Browns won another game against the odds and he continued his building campaign in Cleveland, there was a growing feeling that he has the elements that will someday qualify him as a "great coach." In his third year as the Browns' coach, Gregg was exhibiting the same affinity for detail, technique, and strategy he showed as a player.

Gregg and the Browns began the season with their backs to the wall. Cleveland's schedule for the first four games included Cincinnati, New England, Pittsburgh, and Oakland. "We have a tough schedule," said Gregg in August. "But we're pretty tough ourselves. We're hard to discourage."

Indeed, there was evidence of that persistence in the victory over New England. The Browns won the coin toss to start sudden death and never gave up the football, using 10 plays to drive to the Patriots' 18 where, surprisingly, Gregg overruled quarterback Brian Sipe and sent in Cockroft on second down to end it all with his 35-yard kick. "Let's take our three points and go home," Gregg said. "I'm tired."

Cleveland's victory came at the same time as the long-awaited meeting of Oakland and Pittsburgh, fierce AFC rivals and combatants in many a titanic postseason struggle in recent years. The world champion Raiders turned their week two regular season meeting into a one-sided game, taking a 16–0 lead before a stunned crowd at Pittsburgh and holding on to win 16–7.

The Raiders intercepted three of Pittsburgh quarterback Terry Bradshaw's passes, fell on two Steelers' fumbles, and applied the usual Raiders' clincher—a great kicking game. Errol Mann had three field goals and Ray Guy averaged 43.6 yards on eight punts and regularly kicked off into the end zone—a greatly underrated feat now that NFL teams kick off from the 35 not the 40 yard line.

"We're not happy," Pittsburgh coach Chuck Noll said afterwards. "But when somebody beats your tail, what can you do except go back to the drawing board and start over.

O.J. Simpson, bothered by an ankle injury, started anyway and gained a scant 43 yards on 15 carries as Buffalo suffered a 26–6 loss to Denver. Broncos' quarterback Craig Morton ran five yards for one touchdown and threw a one-yard pass to tight end Riley Odoms for another. Otis Armstrong rushed for 96 yards, including a 35- and a 1-yard run that constituted Denver's two-play drive for its second touchdown.

The Broncos' main ingredient, though, was their defense, which registered its second straight shutout. (The Bills' touchdown came on Bo Cornell's 26-yard return of Lonnie Perrin's fumble in the second quarter.) Buffalo gained only 129 yards in total offense.

Good, But...

The two glamour players who experienced frustrating beginnings a week earlier straightened themselves out in week two. Joe Namath quarterbacked Los Angeles to a 20–0 victory over Philadelphia, with 12 completions in 23 attempts and touchdown passes to Terry Nelson and Lawrence McCutcheon. Namath was allowed to call his own plays and after it was over he said, "I got a little conservative in the second half; that won't happen again."

Tony Dorsett was still a substitute for the Dallas Cowboys, but he scored his first two professional touchdowns on runs of 11 and 34 yards as Dallas crushed the New York Giants 41–21. "I'm not satisfied," Dorsett said after the game. "I had some mental breakdowns. I missed an audible. I dropped a pass. So that's not good enough."

David Boss

Joe Namath, calling his own plays, engineers a 20–0 Los Angeles victory over Philadelphia.

T. K. Makita

Mark van Eeghen looks for running room during world champion Oakland's 16–7 win at Pittsburgh.

Thomas Croke

Above, Don Cockroft's overtime field goal gives Cleveland a Monday night-Tuesday morning win over Patriots.

Frank Rippon

Below, Miami's Benny Malone dances through 49ers.

Ron Ross

Below, Falcons' Jenkins (84) vs. Redskins' Lavender.

Numbers

Standings

AFC East	W	L	T	Pct.	Pts.	OP
Baltimore	2	0	0	1.000	49	26
Miami	2	0	0	1.000	32	15
New England	1	1	0	.500	48	47
Buffalo	0	2	0	.000	6	39
N.Y. Jets	0	2	0	.000	12	40
AFC Central						
Cleveland	2	0	0	1.000	43	30
Houston	2	0	0	1.000	36	10
Cincinnati	1	1	0	.500	45	33
Pittsburgh	1	1	0	.500	34	16
AFC West						
Denver	2	0	0	1.000	33	6
Oakland	2	0	0	1.000	40	7
San Diego	1	1	0	.500	23	31
Kansas City	0	2	0	.000	24	44
Seattle	0	2	0	.000	34	71
NFC East	**W**	**L**	**T**	**Pct.**	**Pts.**	**OP**
Dallas	2	0	0	1.000	57	31
N.Y. Giants	1	1	0	.500	41	58
Philadelphia	1	1	0	.500	13	23
St. Louis	1	1	0	.500	16	20
Washington	1	1	0	.500	27	26
NFC Central						
Chicago	1	1	0	.500	43	36
Detroit	1	1	0	.500	43	49
Green Bay	1	1	0	.500	34	36
Minnesota	1	1	0	.500	19	19
Tampa Bay	0	2	0	.000	6	22
NFC West						
Atlanta	1	1	0	.500	23	16
Los Angeles	1	1	0	.500	26	17
New Orleans	0	2	0	.000	39	47
San Francisco	0	2	0	.000	15	46

Scores

American Football Conference

Baltimore 20, New York Jets 12
Cincinnati 42, Seattle 20
Denver 26, Buffalo 6
Cleveland 30, New England 27, overtime
Oakland 16, Pittsburgh 7
San Diego 23, Kansas City 27

National Football Conference

Dallas 41, New York Giants 21
Detroit 23, New Orleans 19
Los Angeles 20, Philadelphia 0
Minnesota 9, Tampa Bay 3
St. Louis 16, Chicago 13
Washington 10, Atlanta 6

Interconference Games

Houston 16, Green Bay 10
Miami 19, San Francisco 15
AFC, 4 victories.

Newsmakers

Greg Pruitt gained 151 yards in the Browns' win over the Patriots, edging Detroit's **Dexter Bussey** by one yard for the week's lead. Los Angeles' **Lawrence McCutcheon,** a 1,000-yard rusher three of the previous four seasons, had gained only 43 in week one, but rebounded for 106 against Philadelphia.

Pittsburgh's **Terry Bradshaw** had 268 yards passing in his team's loss to Oakland, his fourth highest total in a pro. **Jim Hart** of St. Louis threw for 215 yards against Chicago and along the way completed 12 passes in a row, setting a club record.

Three men caught seven passes apiece: **Sam Cunningham** of New England, **Alfred Jenkins** of Atlanta, and **Barty Smith** of Green Bay.

Week 3

The Third Week, October 2, 1977

People

Raymond Clayborn
New England
The rookie speedster, return specialist, and candidate for a starting cornerback position made the wildest play in a wild game, returning a kickoff 100 yards for a touchdown in a loss to the New York Jets. It was the longest return in the NFL since 1975.

Gary Fencik
Chicago
A Yale man as a feared "hitter" in the NFL? Fencik, the all-time leading pass receiver at Yale, a 1976 Miami draft choice, and now Chicago's strong safety, made 17 tackles in the loss to New Orleans. A week earlier, he had 15 against St. Louis.

Duriel Harris
Miami
The Dolphins have three gamebreakers in Harris, Nat Moore, and Freddie Solomon and call them "Explo '77." It was Harris who exploded against Houston with five pass receptions, one for a touchdown. Two others set up scores in a 27–7 victory.

Efren Herrera
Dallas
Extra points have proven troublesome for some NFL kickers since the goal posts moved to the end lines in 1972. Not for Herrera, however. With two more against Tampa Bay, he stood at a perfect 75-for-75 in PATs in three seasons. He also kicked three field goals.

Ezra Johnson
Green Bay
Herrera can be grateful Dallas has no games scheduled against Green Bay and its ace rookie kick-blocker, Johnson. He broke through to knock down a PAT for the second straight week. "The line gave a good surge and I got up there," he said.

Walt Michaels
New York Jets
The heart of the Jets for years as an assistant coach, he reached a milestone by winning his first game as head coach when the Jets edged New England 30–27. "There's a whole new attitude around here," said linebacker Greg Buttle.

Reflections

The years of frustration in New Orleans have neither dimmed Archie Manning's infinite variety nor quelled his indomitable spirit. He remains one of the most exciting, unpredictable quarterbacks ever to play the game.

This week against the Chicago Bears Manning ran for three touchdowns, gliding over the azure turf at Soldier Field to lead the Saints to a 42–24 victory and spoil "Homecoming Day" for Bears' alumni.

New Orleans fans were anxious to see Manning return from his 1976 injuries and take command of second-year coach Hank Stram's varied offense. They got a taste of it as Manning called his own signal three times, all on third down, and went 8, 2, and 11 yards to score.

"The plays I scored on came on what we call the quarterback draw trap," Manning explained afterwards. "It's a great play, a super play, but it has some pros and cons. For one thing, it can get the quarterback killed."

The beleaguered Bears, wary of Manning's running, gave up a fourth touchdown on the same play. Calling it once more, Manning pulled up, spotted running back Chuck Muncie, and hit him with a pass that Muncie turned into a 35-yard touchdown.

The Saints' victory wasn't all offense. Defensive end Bob Pollard and linebacker Jim Merlo, two veterans who also have experienced a good deal of frustration in New Orleans, scored touchdowns, Pollard on a 52-yard fumble return and Merlo on a 57-yard interception.

No category exists for it in the record book but the Bears may have approached some kind of dubious standard when they were called for offensive pass interference three times. And at least a half-dozen passes by quarterback Bob Avellini were dropped.

A sympathetic Red Grange, one of the "old grads" attending the game, defended Bears' receivers, saying, "The ball is much narrower and longer than it was when I played, and it's more difficult to hold on to."

Manning wasn't the only quarterback who ran with the football this week. Craig Morton, earning nothing but raves so far in his new job as quarterback of the Denver Broncos, ran bootleg plays of 13 and 12 yards during a drive that culminated in Morton's one-yard run for a score as the Broncos won their third straight, 24–13 over Seattle.

Elsewhere, Joe Namath of Los Angeles made the longest run of his life, scrambling and careening for seven yards to make a first down during the Rams' 34–14 victory over San Francisco. And James Harris of San Diego had a 12-yard scramble to set up a touchdown in 24–3 over Cincinnati.

As the NFL completed its third week, four teams were finding the going especially difficult. Chicago, Cincinnati, New England, and St. Louis all lost for the second time, and no one could have predicted that kind of trouble for teams that were supposed to be powerful contenders. New England could have pointed to the contract walkout of guard John Hannah and tackle Leon Gray (they eventually rejoined the team) as the key to its difficulties. But after the Patriots lost a 30–27 decision to the New York Jets, coach Chuck Fairbanks of New England said, "We played like a bad team. Maybe we are a bad team."

A Double Y Whammy

The Detroit Lions came up with an unusual gimmick for their annual pursuit of the NFC Central Division championship, a title that has gone to the Minnesota Vikings for eight of the last nine seasons.

The Lions' gimmick is a two tight end offense with a twist—the tight ends, or Y's, Charlie Sanders and David Hill, are in the gaps between the tackles and the wide receivers, lined up in the backfield.

"We were not moving the ball with our basic formations during preseason," said Detroit offensive coordinator Ed Hughes. "All of us felt we needed something different.

"We opened with the 'Double-Y' against the Bears. Both tight ends were in the backfield on opposite sides in the gaps but off the line of scrimmage. This gave us the double wing effect. The lone remaining back was either Horace King or Dexter Bussey. Sometimes we left both of them in and took out one wide receiver.

"Against New Orleans, we moved the tight ends inside. We also have another variation on long yardage with no remaining backs."

Leaving Bussey in the game in week three against Philadelphia proved a good idea as he scored two touchdowns in a 17–13 Lions' win.

In a weekend for running quarterbacks, Greg Landry of the Lions, once one of the runningest, stayed in the pocket and passed for 207 yards. It helped him hold onto the NFC passing lead and prove that trends go in both directions in an ever-changing NFL.

David Boss

Rams' Larry Brooks sacks 49ers' quarterback Scott Bull during Los Angeles's 34–14 victory.

Don Lansu

Saints' quarterback Archie Manning runs for one of his three touchdowns in 42–24 romp over Bears.

N. Y. Jets

Jets' Artimus Parker intercepts pass intended for Stanley Morgan in New York's 30–27 upset of Patriots.

Peter Read Miller

Below, San Diego's Rickey Young attracts Bengals.

T. K. Makita

Below, Bucs' Gary Huff inspects Cowboys' defense.

Numbers

Standings

AFC East	W	L	T	Pct.	Pts.	OP
Baltimore	3	0	0	1.000	66	40
Miami	3	0	0	1.000	59	22
New England	1	2	0	.333	75	77
N.Y. Jets	1	2	0	.333	42	67
Buffalo	0	3	0	.000	20	56
AFC Central						
Cleveland	2	1	0	.667	57	58
Houston	2	1	0	.667	43	37
Pittsburgh	2	1	0	.667	62	30
Cincinnati	1	2	0	.333	48	57
AFC West						
Denver	3	0	0	1.000	57	19
Oakland	3	0	0	1.000	77	35
San Diego	2	1	0	.667	47	34
Kansas City	0	3	0	.000	52	81
Seattle	0	3	0	.000	47	95
NFC East	**W**	**L**	**T**	**Pct.**	**Pts.**	**OP**
Dallas	3	0	0	1.000	80	38
Washington	2	1	0	.667	51	40
N.Y. Giants	1	2	0	.333	44	75
Philadelphia	1	2	0	.333	26	40
St. Louis	1	2	0	.333	30	44
NFC Central						
Detroit	2	1	0	.667	60	62
Minnesota	2	1	0	.667	38	26
Chicago	1	2	0	.333	67	78
Green Bay	1	2	0	.333	41	55
Tampa Bay	0	3	0	.000	13	45
NFC West						
Atlanta	2	1	0	.667	40	19
Los Angeles	2	1	0	.667	60	31
New Orleans	1	2	0	.333	81	71
San Francisco	0	3	0	.000	29	80

Scores

American Football Conference

Baltimore 17, Buffalo 14
San Diego 24, Cincinnati 3
Denver 24, Seattle 13
Miami 27, Houston 7
New York Jets 30, New England 27
Oakland 37, Kansas City 28
Pittsburgh 28, Cleveland 14

National Football Conference

Atlanta 17, New York Giants 3
Dallas 23, Tampa Bay 7
Detroit 17, Philadelphia 13
Los Angeles 34, San Francisco 14
Minnesota 19, Green Bay 7
New Orleans 42, Chicago 24
Washington 24, St. Louis 14

Interconference Games

AFC, 4 victories.

Newsmakers

Mark van Eeghen gained 116 yards and **Clarence Davis** 102 for Oakland, and rookie **Tony Reed** 119 for Kansas City, the first time there were three players in the same game with 100 yards or more since 1973.

Pittsburgh's **Terry Bradshaw** threw three touchdown passes against Cleveland, equalling his career high. Oakland's **Ken Stabler** had 297 yards passing against Kansas City.

Lynn Swann of the Steelers had a career-best seven catches, scoring twice, and also had a 31-yard punt return. Others with seven catches included Buffalo's **Bob Chandler,** Baltimore's **Lydell Mitchell,** and Detroit's **Horace King.**

Week 4

The Fourth Week, October 9, 1977

People

Ronnie Coleman
Houston
Surprising the Steelers, the Oilers' running back threw an option pass and wide receiver Ken Burrough turned it into a 44-yard touchdown. Coleman had been an accomplished option passer at Alabama A&M but this was the first time he tried it in the NFL.

Charlie Davis
St. Louis
The 265-pound defensive tackle picked up a fumble by Dallas quarterback Roger Staubach and went 35 yards for a touchdown. Staubach had brought his arm forward as if to pass but was pulling the ball in to pump again when it popped loose.

Mike Fuller
San Diego
Filling in on returns because exciting Johnny Rodgers was ailing, the little safety sped 88 yards on a punt return for a touchdown and helped direct a defense that blanked New Orleans 14–0, the first shutout for a Hank Stram-coached team in 14 years.

Herb Lusk
Philadelphia
Football's "Praying Tailback" scored two touchdowns in Philadelphia's 28–10 victory over the New York Giants, and each time he knelt in the end zone to pray after scoring. One of his runs was for 70 yards, the Eagles' longest since 1958.

Errol Mann
Oakland
The NFL's hottest kicker so far, Mann had four field goals in the Raiders' 26–10 victory over Cleveland. "The holder and the snap are always good here. All you really have to do is run up and swing your leg," explained the former Detroit Lions' specialist.

Sammy White
Minnesota
The week's strangest play occurred when White took a handoff from Ahmad Rashad, who had just caught a pass and was about to be tackled, after which White sped the rest of the way to complete a 59-yard touchdown in a victory over Detroit.

Reflections

Only a few quarterbacks in pro football have commanded the unquestioned allegiance of their teammates, have selected and executed plays flawlessly, have been Peerless Leaders. The Baltimore Colts have had two quarterbacks who have met those criteria—Johnny Unitas, who has retired, and the team's present wonder-worker, 26-year-old Bert Jones.

There was a big crowd in Baltimore this week to watch Jones lead the Colts into a showdown with the Miami Dolphins for the lead in the AFC Eastern Division, and also to honor Unitas for his contributions to the team in a special ceremony at halftime.

The game more than lived up to the occasion. The Colts swapped big plays with the Dolphins, came from behind after trailing 28–10 at one point, and won 45–28 to remain unbeaten and acquire sole ownership of the lead in the AFC East.

Running back Lydell Mitchell went 64 yards to score on the first play from scrimmage, but Miami answered that immediately when Freddie Solomon raced 90 yards for a touchdown on the ensuing kickoff. It was 7–7 with just 41 seconds elapsed.

As the Dolphins moved out to 28 points, running back Benny Malone ran 52 and 66 yards for touchdowns, the longest of his career, and wide receiver Duriel Harris caught four passes for 127 yards.

As usual, however, Jones proved to be the difference. He threw four touchdown passes, equaling his best game as Colts' quarterback, to drop the Dolphins to second place.

Jones emerged as the overwhelmingly top-rated AFC passer; his nearest rival, Bob Griese of Miami, was nearly 14 rating points behind.

"We couldn't contain the Colts when we had to," Miami coach Don Shula said later. "It's no accident that Bert Jones was voted the most valuable player [in the AFC] last year."

The ceremony for Unitas was a warm *affaire d'amour* in which he referred to his former teammates, many of whom were present, as "all the old men who got us where we are today."

The exciting Colts-Dolphins game was just the beginning. There were 15 touchdown plays covering 50 yards or more in the NFL in what was called "big play weekend."

The Colts' position atop the AFC East was not unexpected; they have won that division the last two years. But there were surprises in store for another perennial AFC powerhouse this weekend.

The Houston Oilers were atop the AFC Central Division after stopping the Pittsburgh Steelers 27–10 in a game in which the Steelers committed nine turnovers, the most in Chuck Noll's nine years as head coach, and lost quarterbacks Terry Bradshaw and Mike Kruczek to injuries.

Houston intercepted Bradshaw four times before he went out with a fractured wrist, after which Kruczek left the game with a shoulder separation.

"Anytime you get nine turnovers in a game, you should win," said Houston coach O. A. (Bum) Phillips. "I felt bad for Bradshaw and Kruczek, except that they were on the other team. I felt we were going to win the game, even if they hadn't got hurt. We had four interceptions off the number one guy."

Hasty Replacement

Rookie safety substitute Tony Dungy, who had played quarterback in college at Minnesota, finished the game and fumbled once and was intercepted twice. Tom Moore, an assistant coach at Minnesota when Dungy was there and now a Steelers' assistant, frantically briefed Dungy on the Steelers' offense by comparing the Steelers' plays to ones they had used at Minnesota. "Coach Moore was trying to tell me that thirty-four here is just like thirty we had in college," Dungy said. "We didn't have a whole lot of plays."

Atlanta was an even greater surprise, sitting atop the NFC West after its 7–0 victory over San Francisco, coupled with Los Angeles's 24–23 loss at Chicago in which quarterback Joe Namath attempted 40 passes in the rain and completed only 16.

And the Denver Broncos were unbeaten and in a tie with Oakland for the AFC West lead following their 23–7 triumph over Kansas City.

On "big play weekend," a couple of veterans who are used to making them were doing so for St. Louis, while a newcomer made his biggest play yet for the rival Dallas Cowboys. Running back Terry Metcalf had a 62-yard run and wide receiver Mel Gray caught a 60-yard pass from quarterback Jim Hart for the Cardinals, but running back Tony Dorsett darted 77 yards and finished the day with 141 and two touchdowns to lead Dallas's 30–24 victory. Dorsett's 8.2-yard average easily led the NFL but he was still only a substitute who played the second and fourth quarters.

Russ Russell

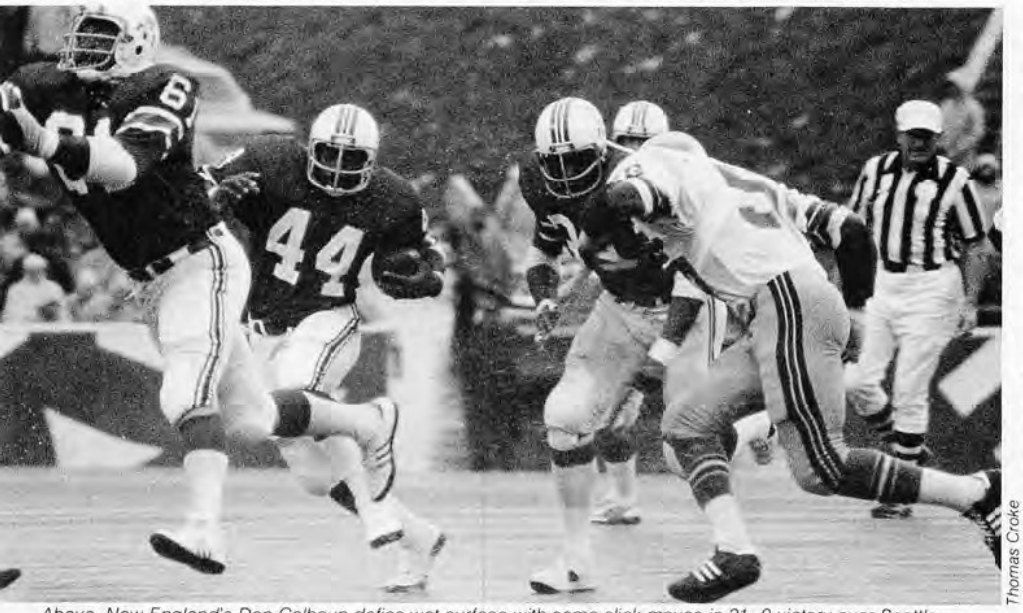
Dallas's prized rookie Tony Dorsett juke-steps a Cardinals' defender in Cowboys' 30–24 victory.

Fred Anderson

Minnesota's Jeff Wright latches on to receiver Luther Blue in 14–7 triumph over Detroit.

Lou Witt

Official's time out: head linesman Dave Hawk after collision with Steelers' Jack Lambert.



Thomas Croke

Above, New England's Don Calhoun defies wet surface with some slick moves in 31–0 victory over Seattle.
Below, 49ers' Harper and Hart work on Falcons' Eley.

Arthur Anderson

Ron Ross

Deja vu on Unitas Day: No. 19 waves to the crowd.

Numbers

Standings

AFC East	W	L	T	Pct.	Pts.	OP
Baltimore	4	0	0	1.000	111	68
Miami	3	1	0	.750	87	67
New England	2	2	0	.500	106	77
N.Y. Jets	2	2	0	.500	66	86
Buffalo	0	4	0	.000	39	80
AFC Central						
Houston	3	1	0	.750	70	47
Cincinnati	2	2	0	.500	65	64
Cleveland	2	2	0	.500	67	84
Pittsburgh	2	2	0	.500	72	57
AFC West						
Denver	4	0	0	1.000	80	26
Oakland	4	0	0	1.000	103	45
San Diego	3	1	0	.750	61	34
Kansas City	0	4	0	.000	59	104
Seattle	0	4	0	.000	47	126
NFC East	**W**	**L**	**T**	**Pct.**	**Pts.**	**OP**
Dallas	4	0	0	1.000	110	62
Washington	3	1	0	.750	61	40
Philadelphia	2	2	0	.500	54	50
N.Y. Giants	1	3	0	.250	54	103
St. Louis	1	3	0	.250	54	74
NFC Central						
Minnesota	3	1	0	.750	52	33
Chicago	2	2	0	.500	91	101
Detroit	2	2	0	.500	67	76
Green Bay	1	3	0	.250	48	72
Tampa Bay	0	4	0	.000	13	55
NFC West						
Atlanta	3	1	0	.750	47	19
Los Angeles	2	2	0	.500	83	55
New Orleans	1	3	0	.250	81	85
San Francisco	0	4	0	.000	29	87

Scores

American Football Conference
Baltimore 45, Miami 28
Denver 23, Kansas City 7
Houston 27, Pittsburgh 10
New England 31, Seattle 0
New York Jets 24, Buffalo 19
Oakland 26, Cleveland 10

National Football Conference
Atlanta 7, San Francisco 0
Chicago 24, Los Angeles 23
Dallas 30, St. Louis 24
Minnesota 14, Detroit 7
Philadelphia 28, New York Giants 10
Washington 10, Tampa Bay 0

Interconference Games
Cincinnati 17, Green Bay 7
San Diego 14, New Orleans 0
AFC, 6 victories.

Newsmakers

Lydell Mitchell of Baltimore gained 142 yards, **Benny Malone** of Miami gained 139, and **Tony Dorsett** of Dallas had his best day yet with 141 yards. **Walter Payton** of Chicago gained 126 and advanced to sixth in all-time Bears' rushing in less than three seasons. **O.J. Simpson** of Buffalo went over 100 for the first time with 122 against the New York Jets.

Fran Tarkenton passed for 269 yards in Minnesota's victory over Detroit. The Lions' **Greg Landry** had 25 completions and 250 yards.

Tony Galbreath of New Orleans caught nine passes and **Bob Chandler** of Buffalo seven. There were seven players with six receptions apiece.

Week 5

The Fifth Week, October 16, 1977

People

Glenn Bujnoch
Cincinnati
Relegated to a guard's usual supporting role during a play at Pittsburgh, Bujnoch became the star performer instead. Quarterback John Reaves rolled out but was trapped. He quickly lateraled to Bujnoch, who scored a four-yard touchdown.

Curtis Johnson
Miami
Cornerback and special teams terror Johnson has what coach Don Shula calls "intelligent recklessness." Johnson batted down a field goal attempt for the eighth block of his career (five field goals, two punts, and one extra point) as Miami beat the Jets 21–17.

Paul Krause
Minnesota
Holder Krause worked a fake field goal and threw an 11-yard touchdown pass to tight end Stu Voigt, giving the Vikings a 22–16 sudden death victory over Chicago. The play surprised even quarterback Fran Tarkenton, who clearly had wanted a touchdown to win it.

Don McCauley
Baltimore
The Colts' running back and short-yardage specialist scored his seventh touchdown, nearly twice as many as the nearest man in the AFC. McCauley, who comes into games in pressure situations for the unbeaten Colts, is 20 for 30 in third-down runs this year.

Steve Myer
Seattle
The Seahawks climbed out of the division cellar for the first time in their history after quarterback Myer completed 20 of 30 passes, including a club record 8 straight, for 252 yards and four touchdowns as Seattle whipped Tampa Bay 30–23 in "Expansion Bowl II."

Ray Wersching
San Francisco
Out-of-work, Wersching was planning to go to Newport Beach "and sail a friend's boat down to San Diego." Instead, he signed on as the 49ers' new kicker and boomed a 50-yard field goal, longest of his career. The 49ers lost again, however, 20–17 to the Giants.

Reflections

The Denver Broncos have been the epitome of patience and longsuffering in the National Football League. They have experienced mostly frustration in their 18 years in the NFL. Broncos' fans endured 13 losing seasons until 1973, when the team went 7–5–2. No team has waited longer for a title.

Things have changed in Denver, however. The Broncos have a defense that has matured into one of the league's best; a new general manager, Fred Gehrke, and a stable of eight number one draft choices on the team, reflecting the wisdom of Gehrke's long years of prior service as player personnel director; a new coach, Robert (Red) Miller; a new quarterback, Craig Morton; and a new approach embodying some old, familiar elements of winning football—aggressiveness, enthusiasm, and togetherness.

This week the Broncos whipped the Oakland Raiders 30–7 in the biggest upset of the season so far, ending Oakland's 17-game regular season and postseason winning streak. Denver's expertly played three-four defense intercepted Oakland quarterback Ken Stabler seven times.

The Raiders, who were stopped one game short of the NFL record for consecutive victories, scored only one touchdown (Stabler's nine-yard pass to tight end Dave Casper in the first quarter), and lost in their own back yard of Oakland-Alameda County Stadium.

The most telling blow of all, however, came with seconds left in the first half. Denver kicker Jim Turner lined up for an apparent field goal attempt. Holder (and reserve quarterback) Norris Weese took the snap. Turner swung his leg, faking a kick, and then rolled out into the flat. Weese threw him a pass and Turner fled past the startled Raiders into the end zone for a 25-yard touchdown.

Turner's touchdown and his subsequent extra point put the Broncos ahead 21–7 at halftime. Clearly, the defending Super Bowl champions were upset at giving up a touchdown to an aging 36-year-old kicker wearing high-top shoes that seem better suited for a display case at the Pro Football Hall of Fame.

"I've been playing against the Raiders for fourteen years and I'm sure they never thought the ball would be thrown to me," Turner said.

The other half of Denver's surprise passing attack, Weese, said, "Jim was so wide open I couldn't believe it. I threw it high and soft, realizing he's not used to catching passes and he's slow."

A beaten Stabler added, "They kicked hell out of us. It sure makes for an interesting race in our division, doesn't it?"

There was another interesting race going on, as usual, in the AFC Central. Don Cockroft kicked a 30-yard field goal as time ran out at the Astrodome to give the Cleveland Browns a 24–23 victory over the Houston Oilers. The Browns ended their harrowing journey through five tough opponents in the first five weeks of the season, showing a 3–2 record that was good enough to put them in a tie with the surprising Oilers for the division lead.

The other two AFC Central teams, Pittsburgh and Cincinnati, played an error-filled but exciting Monday night game at Three Rivers Stadium in Pittsburgh.

Pittsburgh fumbled six times, had a punt blocked, and missed an extra point. Cincinnati kicker Chris Bahr lined up for a 50-yard field goal attempt but the snap went over his head and as both teams chased it Bahr inadvertently muffed it in the direction of the Pittsburgh goal; the Steelers' Mel Blount grabbed it at the 18 and ran to the Bengals' 3. Running back Rocky Bleier scored for the Steelers two plays later and they went on to a 20–14 victory.

Moments of Decision

Atlanta's defense rivaled Denver's as one of the best in the NFL, but O.J. Simpson of Buffalo ran through the Falcons for 138 yards, his highest total this season. The Bills edged the Falcons 3–0, posting their first victory after 13 losses in a row. It was also the first regular season triumph for Jim Ringo as Bills' head coach.

Atlanta's Leeman Bennett went for a touchdown instead of a field goal on fourth down near the Bills' goal line with minutes left in the game. The attempt failed when quarterback Scott Hunter fumbled and Buffalo's Keith Moody recovered.

San Diego, another surprise team, lost to New England 24–20. Chargers' coach Tommy Prothro elected to punt at his own 43 with fourth and one late in the game. Jeff West managed only a 16-yard punt and when San Diego got the ball back later, it was at its own 25. The Chargers never came back.

"If it was only a foot, I was going to go for it," Prothro said of his decision to punt. "It was closer to a yard than a foot."

Lou Witt

Fullback Cleo Miller (30) helps Cleveland squeeze past Houston in the Astrodome, 24–23.

Fred Anderson

Led by Alan Page (88), a wall of Vikings blocks second field goal in 22–16 win over Chicago.

Robert L. Smith

Bills win first for Ringo; he offers thanks.

Russ Russell

Randy White stops Billy Kilmer in Dallas's win.

Below, coach Red Miller and general manager Fred Gehrke rejoice over Denver's 30–7 upset of Oakland.

Michael Zagaris

Numbers

Standings

AFC East	W	L	T	Pct.	Pts.	OP
Baltimore	5	0	0	1.000	128	74
Miami	4	1	0	.800	108	84
New England	3	2	0	.600	130	97
N.Y. Jets	2	3	0	.400	83	107
Buffalo	1	4	0	.200	42	80
AFC Central						
Cleveland	3	2	0	.600	91	107
Houston	3	2	0	.600	93	71
Pittsburgh	3	2	0	.600	92	71
Cincinnati	2	3	0	.400	79	84
AFC West						
Denver	5	0	0	1.000	110	33
Oakland	4	1	0	.800	110	75
San Diego	3	2	0	.600	81	58
Seattle	1	4	0	.200	77	149
Kansas City	0	5	0	.000	65	121
NFC East	**W**	**L**	**T**	**Pct.**	**Pts.**	**OP**
Dallas	5	0	0	1.000	144	78
Washington	3	2	0	.600	77	74
N.Y. Giants	2	3	0	.400	74	120
Philadelphia	2	3	0	.400	71	71
St. Louis	2	3	0	.400	75	91
NFC Central						
Minnesota	4	1	0	.800	74	49
Detroit	3	2	0	.600	77	82
Chicago	2	3	0	.400	107	123
Green Bay	1	4	0	.200	54	82
Tampa Bay	0	5	0	.000	36	85
NFC West						
Atlanta	3	2	0	.600	47	22
Los Angeles	3	2	0	.600	97	62
New Orleans	1	4	0	.200	88	99
San Francisco	0	5	0	.000	46	107

Scores

American Football Conference
Baltimore 17, Kansas City 6
Cleveland 24, Houston 23
Denver 30, Oakland 7
Miami 21, New York Jets 17
New England 24, San Diego 20
Pittsburgh 20, Cincinnati 14

National Football Conference
Dallas 34, Washington 16
Detroit 10, Green Bay 6
Los Angeles 14, New Orleans 7
Minnesota 22, Chicago 16, overtime
New York Giants 20, San Francisco 17
St. Louis 21, Philadelphia 17

Interconference Games
Buffalo 3, Atlanta 0
Seattle 30, Tampa Bay 23
AFC, 8 victories.

Newsmakers

Minnesota's **Chuck Foreman** gained 150 yards, going over 100 for the first time. New England's **Sam Cunningham** gained 141. Buffalo's **O.J. Simpson** ran for 138 and went over 10,000 yards for his career, to 10,052, second in NFL history to Jim Brown. Baltimore's **Lydell Mitchell** gained 126 yards and went over 500 for the season.

Oakland's **Ken Stabler** completed 20 of 40 passes for 274 yards and one touchdown but was intercepted seven times by the Broncos. Philadelphia's **Ron Jaworski** had 264 yards passing, also in defeat.

Tampa Bay's **Morris Owens** caught nine passes and San Diego's **Don Woods** eight, both in losing causes, and Detroit's **Horace King** had seven.

Week 6

The Sixth Week, October 23, 1977

People

Gary Barbaro
Kansas City
The Chiefs' 6-foot 4-inch free safety intercepted a pass at the 1 yard line with 23 seconds left, preserving his team's first victory of the season, 21–16 over San Diego. It also made Barbaro the NFL leader in interceptions with five for the season.

Bob Griese
Miami
Griese threw two touchdown passes as Miami beat Seattle 31–13. His new glasses (to correct double vision) fogged up in the rain for the second time this season. "People have sent me all kinds of things to help," he said. "My locker looks like a drugstore."

John James
Atlanta
James put five punts out of bounds inside the 14 yard line in a win over Chicago. Atlanta was called for a penalty on one of the kicks but the Bears let the play stand rather than give James another chance. "That was a very high compliment," he said later.

Charlie Johnson
Philadelphia
Rookie Johnson, the third starter in six weeks at middle guard in Philadelphia's new three-four defense, was credited with 17 tackles in the Eagles' 16–10 loss to Dallas. He is a Vietnam veteran and a weightlifter who can bench press 400 pounds.

Jay Saldi
Dallas
The winning touchdown in the Dallas-Philadelphia game came when reserve tight end Saldi blocked a punt and Charlie Waters picked up the loose ball and went 17 yards to score early in the fourth quarter. The Cowboys continued their best start in history.

Dwight White
Pittsburgh
White can give lessons in how to play defensive end with enthusiasm. He made nine tackles, two quarterback sacks, and even intercepted two passes as the Steelers beat Houston and got back into a tie for the lead in the AFC Central Division.

Reflections

Hardly anyone expected the New England Patriots to let the Baltimore Colts and Miami Dolphins have the AFC Central Division all to themselves this season. Sure enough, the Patriots served notice this week, dumping Baltimore quarterback Bert Jones five times for losses and whipping the Colts 17–3 to throw the division into a three-team race. (The vastly improved New York Jets retained an outside chance at 2–4 but the struggling Buffalo Bills fell farther behind the pack.)

The Colts' loss to New England was their first of the season; it also was the first time in 36 games under head coach Ted Marchibroda that the Colts had failed to score a touchdown. Jones, who makes the Colts go, was rushed relentlessly by New England. "We were coming from everywhere," said Patriots' defensive end Tony McGee.

Tight end is the newest position in professional football—the concept goes back to about 1930 but the name has been in general use for only a little over a decade—and as part of the continuing fascination with this innovation a player comes along every couple of years who is declared the "prototype" tight end. The current holder of this description is Russ Francis of the Patriots. This week against the Colts, a second-half drive by the Patriots was practically all Francis. He made a spectacular one-handed catch in traffic on third down to keep the drive alive, and seven plays later caught another pass from quarterback Steve Grogan and weaved his way through the Colts as if he were O.J. Simpson for a 31-yard touchdown. After John Smith kicked the extra point, the Patriots were in command, 14–0.

Quarterback is a much older position in the game of football. In recent years it has been synonymous with Joe Namath, as far as the New York Jets were concerned. He was in Los Angeles playing second-string to Pat Haden this week, however, and Richard Todd "arrived" as the Jets' new leader. Once considered a wishbone formation quarterback from Alabama with relatively little passing ability, Todd completed 17 of 29 passes for 396 yards and four touchdowns, and had completions of 87, 52, and 39 yards, as the Jets almost beat the world champion Oakland Raiders. Ken Stabler, an Alabama quarterback from the pre-wishbone era and one whose passing ability has never been in doubt, rallied the Raiders with two fourth quarter touchdowns and they posted a narrow 28–27 victory.

Todd's receiving corps is led by three fast men—rookie Wesley Walker (4.35 seconds for the 40-yard dash), Richard Caster (4.5), and Jerome Barkum (4.7). Walker appeared to have overcome a tendency to drop easy passes, and Caster was back from an injury this week. Todd was hitting them with passes all over the lot before the Raiders salvaged their victory. "I think Todd silenced some of his critics today," said Jets coach Walt Michaels.

New York's other team, the Giants, also did well and the NFC East race was tightening up, too . . . or at least the race for second place was. The Giants beat Washington 17–6 to move into a three-way tie with the Redskins and the St. Louis Cardinals for second place behind unbeaten Dallas, which has a three-game lead over its pursuers.

Chuck Knox of the Los Angeles Rams was another coach savoring the week's results after his Los Angeles Rams overwhelmed the Minnesota Vikings 35–3. The Vikings had won 7 of the previous 10 regular season games against the Rams and beat them in the 1974 and 1976 NFC championship games. This time an emotional Rams team wouldn't be denied. Quarterback Haden played one of his best games as a pro (while Namath watched from the side lines), rookie Wendell Tyler gained 102 yards rushing, and all the Los Angeles units operated flawlessly. "It's been a long time since all three teams—offense, defense, and special teams—played this well," Knox said afterwards.

Profile in Courage

There was an ongoing story of courage and selflessness in Pittsburgh, where quarterback Terry Bradshaw played another game with his broken left wrist sealed in a plastic half-cast and a big wad of Ace bandages and tape. Despite this handicap, Bradshaw completed 16 passes, threw a block on a screen pass, made a one-armed tackle after a Steelers' fumble, saving what might have been a 90-yards-plus touchdown run, and was tackled once with the Oilers landing on the broken wrist, after which the quarterback lay writhing in pain for several moments. But he stayed in the game and the Steelers won 27–10 to move into a tie for the AFC Central lead. It is hard to imagine any other football player ever giving more to his team than Bradshaw was giving to the Steelers.

Russ Russell

Pursued by Philadelphia's Randy Logan, Dallas Cowboys quarterback Roger Staubach rushes for the longest gain of his career, 36 yards. Cowboys won 16–10 for their sixth straight without defeat.

David Boss

Dave Cross

Above, McCutcheon carries as Rams beat Vikings. Below, Raiders gang up on Jets' conversion try.

Above, Malone of Miami knifes through Seahawks. Below, Packers' Carter stops Bucs' Nafziger.

T.K. Makita

Hugh Jones

Numbers

Standings

AFC East	W	L	T	Pct.	Pts.	OP
Baltimore	5	1	0	.833	131	91
Miami	5	1	0	.833	139	97
New England	4	2	0	.667	147	100
N.Y. Jets	2	4	0	.333	110	135
Buffalo	1	5	0	.167	58	107
AFC Central						
Cleveland	4	2	0	.667	118	123
Pittsburgh	4	2	0	.667	119	81
Houston	3	3	0	.500	103	98
Cincinnati	2	4	0	.333	92	108
AFC West						
Denver	6	0	0	1.000	134	46
Oakland	5	1	0	.833	138	102
San Diego	3	3	0	.500	97	79
Kansas City	1	5	0	.167	86	137
Seattle	1	5	0	.167	90	180
NFC East	**W**	**L**	**T**	**Pct.**	**Pts.**	**OP**
Dallas	6	0	0	1.000	160	88
N.Y. Giants	3	3	0	.500	91	126
St. Louis	3	3	0	.500	124	122
Washington	3	3	0	.500	83	91
Philadelphia	2	4	0	.333	81	87
NFC Central						
Minnesota	4	2	0	.667	77	84
Detroit	3	3	0	.500	84	110
Chicago	2	4	0	.333	117	139
Green Bay	2	4	0	.333	67	82
Tampa Bay	0	6	0	.000	36	98
NFC West						
Atlanta	4	2	0	.667	63	32
Los Angeles	4	2	0	.667	132	65
New Orleans	1	5	0	.167	119	148
San Francisco	1	5	0	.167	74	114

Scores

American Football Conference
Cleveland 27, Buffalo 16
Denver 24, Cincinnati 13
Kansas City 21, San Diego 16
Miami 31, Seattle 13
New England 17, Baltimore 3
Oakland 28, New York Jets 27
Pittsburgh 27, Houston 10

National Football Conference
Atlanta 16, Chicago 10
Dallas 16, Philadelphia 10
Green Bay 13, Tampa Bay 0
Los Angeles 35, Minnesota 3
New York Giants 17, Washington 6
St. Louis 49, New Orleans 31
San Francisco 28, Detroit 7

Interconference Games
AFC, 8 victories.

Newsmakers

A substitute turned starter, **Wayne Morris,** scored four touchdowns and gained 95 yards for St. Louis. Oakland's **Mark van Eeghen** carried a club record 36 times for 143 yards.

Richard Todd of the New York Jets became the first NFL passer this season to go over 300 yards when he completed 17 of 29 passes for 396 yards and four touchdowns; a fifth score was called back because of a penalty. **Bobby Scott** passed for 285 yards and three touchdowns while filling in for **Archie Manning** for New Orleans, and **Tony Adams** played in place of **Mike Livingston** for Kansas City and completed 15 of 26 passes for 215 yards and a touchdown.

Rickey Young of San Diego caught nine passes.

Week 7

The Seventh Week, October 30, 1977

People

Steve Grogan
New England
Scoring passes to wide receivers Darryl Stingley and Stanley Morgan and tight end Don Hasselbeck gave Grogan a midseason total of 13, as the Patriots stayed a game behind division leader Baltimore with a 24–13 victory over the New York Jets.

Elois Grooms
New Orleans
When the Saints went to an unorthodox field goal formation late in their game with Los Angeles, defensive end Grooms became an eligible receiver and caught a surprise 3-yard touchdown pass from holder Tom Blanchard that led to an upset of the Rams.

James Harris
San Diego
A fumble by Miami's Benny Malone on his own 33 set the stage for the Chargers' last ditch drive. On the final play of the game, from the five yard line, quarterback Harris kept the ball and plowed into the end zone for the touchdown that produced a 14–13 upset.

Walter Payton
Chicago
Payton had the NFL's best rushing performance to date, 205 yards, to equal Gale Sayers's club mark for a single game. Afterward he said, "I didn't want to break Sayers's record because Sayers is a super guy. What's a record? I just wanted to win the game."

Greg Pruitt
Cleveland
Pruitt's 78-yard scoring burst in the third quarter was the NFL's longest run from scrimmage for the first seven weeks of 1977. It highlighted a 153-yard day for the former Oklahoma running back as the Browns routed the Kansas City Chiefs 44–7.

Bob Tucker
Minnesota
After his long disagreement with the New York Giants, Tucker was acquired by the Vikings in a midweek trade. The former all-pro tight end caught a 6-yard pass from Fran Tarkenton in the fourth quarter for the touchdown that defeated the Atlanta Falcons 14–7.

Reflections

An interesting quirk in the AFC Western Division schedule set the stage for this week's central attraction in the NFL: Oakland at Denver.

Only two weeks ago, the Broncos humiliated the Raiders 30–7 on the world champions' home turf. Now, to mark the halfway point of the season, the two division title contenders were squaring off again.

"Orange Sunday" was to be Denver fans' celebration of the defensive unit that appeared on its way to a club season record for fewest points allowed. In the rarefied Rocky Mountain air, a 6–0 record had produced the sort of feverish lightheadedness usually reserved for a late-season showdown in other cities. Spectators clad themselves in all manner of orange clothing, bought and sold tickets for as much as $150, filled Mile High Stadium, and got ready for a second annihilation of the Raiders.

The Raiders weren't buying it.

"The one thing we didn't want to give them was life," said Oakland head coach John Madden. "We wanted to keep their backs to the wall and have them starting at eighty yards each time they got the ball."

So instead of giving the Broncos a chance to repeat their interception-and-sack festival of two weeks earlier, the Raiders worked mainly on the ground. Ken Stabler attempted only 14 passes and completed 7, one a 21-yard first quarter touchdown to Clifford Branch. Raiders running backs Clarence Davis and Mark van Eeghen picked up 105 and 82 yards and Oakland built a 24–0 lead in the first three quarters.

Meanwhile, though Denver quarterback Craig Morton was able to complete 19 of 32, the Oakland defense held Denver's running game in check. Otis Armstrong gained only 37 yards, and for three periods the Broncos were unable to penetrate deeper than the Raiders' 47-yard line. Oakland's 24–14 victory tied the AFC West again.

Always ready to vault into the contender's role, should Oakland or Denver begin to slip, San Diego kept its hopes alive by squeezing past Miami on the final play of the game. The Dolphins led 13–7 when Chargers' quarterback James Harris sprinted to his right. He was hit by Miami's Norris Thomas, a 170-pound cornerback, at the two but bulled and twisted his 217 pounds into the end zone. Rolf Benirschke's extra point was the margin of victory, 14–13.

San Diego's free safety Clarence Duren kept the Chargers close all afternoon with three interceptions and one fumble recovery.

In Dallas, the Cowboys defeated Detroit 37–0. The Cowboys' 7–0 start is the best in their 18-year history. Roger Staubach threw touchdown passes to Billy Joe DuPree, Scott Laidlaw, and Jay Saldi, and Harvey Martin was credited with three of the Dallas defense's six quarterback sacks.

NFC East contenders St. Louis and Washington, already faced with win-to-survive situations, both won to stay tied for second place with 4-3 records.

In other displays of force, Baltimore beat Pittsburgh, Cleveland routed Kansas City, and Seattle vented its frustration on Buffalo.

The Colts took a 17–0 halftime lead and moved to their sixth victory, 31–21.

Greg Pruitt's 153-yard rushing day and Don Cockroft's three field goals helped the Browns beat the Chiefs 44–7 and move into undisputed first place in the AFC Central at 5–2.

Jim Zorn's touchdown passes to Steve Largent (two), Duke Fergerson, and Don Testerman keyed the Seahawks' 56–17 thrashing of the Bills. Zorn was 11 for 23 for 296 yards through the air, and ran for a fifth touchdown. The Seahawks' score was the highest point output of the 1977 NFL season. To make matters worse for the Bills, O.J. Simpson's ailing right knee showed no sign of improvement. A doubtful starter for the Seattle game, O.J. ran nine times on the Kingdome rug for 32 yards.

Tough Talk

Conrad Dobler, portrayed as everything from a *magna cum laude* in the subtleties of blocking technique to the NFL's neighborhood bully, embellished his reputation with yet another pearl this week. He broke into the scoring column, then noted the significance of his particular scoring style.

In a 28–0 Monday night win over the New York Giants, Dobler fell on a fumble in the end zone for St. Louis's second touchdown.

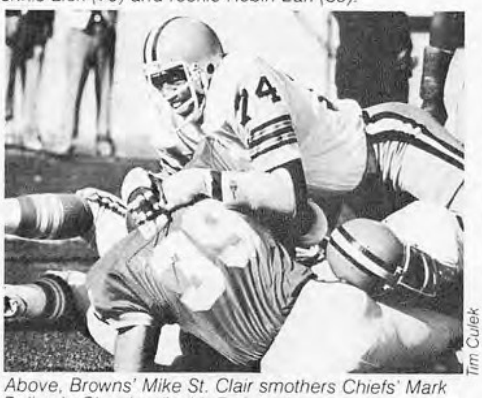
"I saw the ball, grabbed it, and they tried to grab it from me," Dobler said afterward. "Two guys kicked at me and I kicked back. Dan Dierdorf picked one up [Giants' linebacker Brian Kelly], carried him ten yards and shishkabobbed him on the goal post."

The ensuing "rumble," as Dobler described it, put the all-pro guard in a reflective state of mind. "Most people score a touchdown and spike the ball," he mused. "I score one and start a fight."

Vernon Biever

Walter Payton wasn't the whole show as Chicago shut out Green Bay. Here, Bears' running back Art Best looks for room to move among the Packers. He's got help from Dennis Lick (70) and rookie Robin Earl (39).

Robert L. Smith



Tim Culek

Above, Browns' Mike St. Clair smothers Chiefs' Mark Bailey in Cleveland's 44–7 victory.

Above, Sherman Smith carries in Seahawks' rout. Below, Ken Stabler fires as Oakland whips Denver.

Arthur Anderson

Above, 49ers' Cleveland Elam sacks Bucs' Jeb Blount. Below, Patriots' King grabs Jets' Todd.

Barry Staver

Thomas Croke

Numbers

Standings

AFC East	W	L	T	Pct.	Pts.	OP
Baltimore	6	1	0	.857	162	112
Miami	5	2	0	.714	152	111
New England	5	2	0	.714	171	113
N. Y. Jets	2	5	0	.286	123	159
Buffalo	1	6	0	.143	75	163
AFC Central						
Cleveland	5	2	0	.714	162	130
Pittsburgh	4	3	0	.571	140	112
Cincinnati	3	4	0	.429	105	118
Houston	3	4	0	.429	113	111
AFC West						
Denver	6	1	0	.857	148	70
Oakland	6	1	0	.857	162	116
San Diego	4	3	0	.571	111	92
Seattle	2	5	0	.286	146	197
Kansas City	1	6	0	.143	93	181
NFC East	**W**	**L**	**T**	**Pct.**	**Pts.**	**OP**
Dallas	7	0	0	1.000	197	88
St. Louis	4	3	0	.571	152	122
Washington	4	3	0	.571	106	108
N. Y. Giants	3	4	0	.429	91	154
Philadelphia	2	5	0	.286	98	110
NFC Central						
Minnesota	5	2	0	.714	91	91
Chicago	3	4	0	.429	143	139
Detroit	3	4	0	.429	84	147
Green Bay	2	5	0	.286	67	108
Tampa Bay	0	7	0	.000	46	118
NFC West						
Atlanta	4	3	0	.571	70	46
Los Angeles	4	3	0	.571	158	92
New Orleans	2	5	0	.286	146	174
San Francisco	2	5	0	.286	94	124

Scores

American Football Conference

Baltimore 31, Pittsburgh 21
Cincinnati 13, Houston 10, overtime
Cleveland 44, Kansas City 7
New England 24, New York Jets 13
Oakland 24, Denver 14
San Diego 14, Miami 13
Seattle 56, Buffalo 17

National Football Conference

Chicago 26, Green Bay 0
Dallas 37, Detroit 0
Minnesota 14, Atlanta 7
New Orleans 27, Los Angeles 26
San Francisco 20, Tampa Bay 10
St. Louis 28, New York Giants 0
Washington 23, Philadelphia 17

Interconference Games

AFC, 8 victories.

Newsmakers

Los Angeles's **Lawrence McCutcheon** ran for 107 yards, New Orleans's **Tony Galbreath** for 100, and Oakland's **Clarence Davis** for 105.

Washington's **Joe Theismann** completed 16 of 34 passes for 218 yards and two touchdowns. Los Angeles's **Pat Haden** completed 17 of 26, with two touchdowns, in the Rams' loss to New Orleans.

Los Angeles's **Harold Jackson** caught eight passes for 127 yards and two touchdowns. **Darryl Stingley** of New England caught eight passes for 121 yards and one touchdown. **Ahmad Rashad** of Minnesota and **Jim Braxton** of Buffalo had seven catches apiece.

Week 8

The Eighth Week, November 6, 1977

People

Chris Bahr
Cincinnati
For the second week in a row, Bahr, the second-year kicker from Penn State, supplied the winning field goal, a 47-yarder in the third period that gave the Bengals a 10–7 victory over Cleveland. In week seven, he kicked one 22 yards in overtime to beat Houston.

Roland Hooks
Buffalo
Replacing injured O.J. Simpson, Hooks rushed for 155 yards in Buffalo's upset of New England. Afterward, Bills' guard Joe DeLamielleure announced, "Our offensive line is dedicated to getting Roland Hooks a 1,000-yard season." Hooks now has 199.

Ron Jaworski
Philadelphia
The Eagles had an easy time with New Orleans, winning 28–7 thanks to four Jaworski-inspired touchdowns. His performance included scoring passes of 11 and 4 yards to Harold Carmichael. Jaworski also scored on a one-yard sneak and a two-yard rollout.

Rick Kane
Detroit
The rookie running back from San Jose State was called upon to replace injured Dexter Bussey and rushed for 105 yards as the Lions shut out the Chargers. Kane scored two diving touchdowns. "Up and over is the shortest way to the goal," he said.

Dan Pastorini
Houston
Touchdown bombs of 85 and 43 yards to Ken Burrough were the highlights of Pastorini's 246-yard passing effort in a 47–0 romp over Chicago. It was Pastorini's best performance of the season, with 11 completions in 18 attempts and no interceptions.

Rick Upchurch
Denver
In a 21–7 win over Pittsburgh, Upchurch handled five punts, including an 87-yard touchdown, the first punt returned for a score against Pittsburgh since 1969. "It seemed like they weren't getting to the ball... they weren't swarming like they used to," he said.

Reflections

Given the Dallas Cowboys' refusal to lose a game, the remaining members of the NFC's Eastern Division must now address themselves, it seems, to fighting it out for the conference wild card playoff berth.

The Cowboys won again this week, breezing past the New York Giants 24–10. Three long Roger Staubach-to-Drew Pearson passes set up Dallas touchdowns and brought the team's season mark to 8–0, the NFL's one remaining perfect record.

St. Louis (5–3) stayed within dialing distance of the Cowboys with a surprisingly easy 27–7 win over Minnesota at Bloomington. Wayne Morris's 182 yards rushing was the best performance by a Cardinals back since John David Crow gained 203 yards against Pittsburgh in 1960. "I think we were fortunate to catch them [the Vikings] a little flat," said Cardinals head coach Don Coryell.

The week began on a grim note for the struggling Buffalo Bills. As if their 1–6 record at the midway point of the season weren't cause enough for chagrin, news came that O.J. Simpson, practically the team's *raison d'etre*, would be lost for the rest of 1977.

Bothered by nagging injuries since the preseason—including blurred vision in his left eye—Simpson had managed 557 yards on 126 carries. The season-ending diagnosis, more than a simple nag, was that surgery would be required to repair damaged cartilage in his left knee.

Simpson left open the question of an early retirement, saying, "That's a subject I can't deal with right now. I have another year on my contract with the Bills. Once the operation is over and rehabilitation is complete, I'll begin to think about the future. But not before then."

To ease the pain of adjustment to life without O.J., up popped Roland Hooks, a second-year man from North Carolina State who gained 155 yards as the Bills surprised New England 24–14. It was the season's highest single-game total for an AFC rusher. The Patriots lost a key performer early in the game. All-pro tight end Russ Francis left during New England's first offensive series with three broken ribs, the result of a hit delivered by Bills linebacker Bob Nelson.

Turnaround was also the theme in Detroit, where the Lions became the first NFC team to win an interconference game in 1977—this after the AFC's 8–0 dominance for the first seven weeks. Rookie running back Rick Kane gained 105 yards and scored two touchdowns and the Lions beat San Diego 20–0. But even as the analysts were trying to explain the AFC-NFC imbalance, Houston was busy pulverizing Chicago 47–0 in the Astrodome and Kansas City was beating Green Bay 20–10. Baltimore's 10–3 triumph over Washington in a Monday night mudfest left the count AFC 11, NFC 1.

In Houston's victory, quarterback Dan Pastorini passed for touchdowns of 85 and 43 yards to wide receiver Ken Burrough. Billy (White Shoes) Johnson added to the rout with touchdown runs of 61 and 75 yards, the latter a free kick return following a safety.

A driving rain fell on Baltimore's Memorial Stadium for almost the entire Baltimore-Washington game, but Colts quarterback Bert Jones finally broke a 3–3 tie early in the fourth quarter with a 12-yard touchdown pass to Freddie Scott. The Colts won 10–3 to improve their division-leading record to 7–1 and drop the Redskins to a precarious 4–4.

It was a record weekend for NFL attendance. A total of 827,075 fans were on hand for the 14 games, an average of 59,077. The figure topped the previous record of 808,727, set during the first week of 1977.

In Absentia

Kansas City's win over Green Bay was, to a high degree, an emotional response to the firing of head coach Paul Wiggin earlier in the week. It was the first coaching change since the season opened and an unexpected exit for the popular ex-Cleveland Browns defensive end.

Wiggin, who was 5–9 in each of his first two seasons and 1–6 in the first half of 1977, was replaced by defensive backfield coach Tom Bettis. A former pro linebacker with Green Bay (1955–1961), Pittsburgh (1962), and Chicago (1963), Bettis has been coaching with the Chiefs since 1966.

After the win over Green Bay, center Jack Rudnay said, "This is partial atonement for a horrible crime we all committed. Every man in this locker room feels like he was responsible for Paul Wiggin, one of the best men we ever knew, losing his job."

The Chiefs' new head coach announced, "The game ball will go to a fellow by the initials of P. W. I think every player on our team gave us his maximum today, his maximum for Paul Wiggin."

For his part, it was suggested that Bettis at least be awarded a Xerox copy.

Robert L. Smith

Coaches Jim Ringo and Chuck Fairbanks shake after Buffalo's 24–14 surprise of New England.

Fred Anderson

St. Louis running back Wayne Morris eyes hole in Vikings' defense as Jeff Siemon (50) moves in.

T.K. Makita

Above, Newhouse follows Scott, Cowboys roll to 8–0. Below, Colts envelop Redskins' Harmon.

Lou Witt

Above, Rob Carpenter fuels Oilers' big shutout. Below, Chiefs' Frazier stops Packers' Smith.

T.K. Makita

Vernon Biever

Numbers

Standings

AFC East	W	L	T	Pct.	Pts.	OP
Baltimore	7	1	0	.875	172	115
Miami	6	2	0	.750	166	121
New England	5	3	0	.625	185	137
Buffalo	2	6	0	.250	99	177
N.Y. Jets	2	6	0	.250	133	173
AFC Central						
Cleveland	5	3	0	.625	169	140
Cincinnati	4	4	0	.500	115	125
Houston	4	4	0	.500	160	111
Pittsburgh	4	4	0	.500	147	133
AFC West						
Denver	7	1	0	.875	169	77
Oakland	7	1	0	.875	206	123
San Diego	4	4	0	.500	111	112
Kansas City	2	6	0	.250	113	191
Seattle	2	6	0	.250	153	241
NFC East	**W**	**L**	**T**	**Pct.**	**Pts.**	**OP**
Dallas	8	0	0	1.000	221	98
St. Louis	5	3	0	.625	179	129
Washington	4	4	0	.500	109	118
N.Y. Giants	3	5	0	.375	101	178
Philadelphia	3	5	0	.375	126	117
NFC Central						
Minnesota	5	3	0	.625	98	118
Detroit	4	4	0	.500	143	186
Chicago	3	5	0	.375	104	147
Green Bay	2	6	0	.250	77	128
Tampa Bay	0	8	0	.000	46	149
NFC West						
Los Angeles	5	3	0	.625	189	92
Atlanta	4	4	0	.500	73	56
San Francisco	3	5	0	.375	104	127
New Orleans	2	6	0	.250	153	202

Scores

American Football Conference
Buffalo 24, New England 14
Cincinnati 10, Cleveland 7
Denver 21, Pittsburgh 7
Miami 14, New York Jets 10
Oakland 44, Seattle 7

National Football Conference
Dallas 24, New York Giants 10
Los Angeles 31, Tampa Bay 0
Philadelphia 28, New Orleans 7
San Francisco 10, Atlanta 3
St. Louis 27, Minnesota 7

Interconference Games
Baltimore 10, Washington 3
Detroit 20, San Diego 0
Houston 47, Chicago 0
Kansas City 20, Green Bay 10
AFC, 11 victories; NFC 1 victory

Newsmakers

St. Louis's **Wayne Morris** turned in the best day for a Cardinals rusher since 1960 with 182 yards against Minnesota. **Lawrence McCutcheon** surpassed the 5,000-yard mark for his career with a 79-yard day, bringing himself within easy reach of Dick Bass's Los Angeles club record of 5,417.

Oakland's **Ken Stabler** threw one touchdown pass each to **Fred Biletnikoff, Mike Siani,** and **Dave Casper.** Buffalo's **Joe Ferguson** was 15 for 22 for 201 yards and a touchdown.

Buffalo's **Reuben Gant** caught seven passes for 97 yards and one touchdown. Houston's **Ken Burrough** caught six for 180 yards and two touchdowns.

Week 9

The Ninth Week, November 13, 1977

People

Gary Davis
Miami
Davis, a second-year running back from Cal Poly at San Luis Obispo, entered the game with New England as a replacement for Benny Malone. He scored on a 1-yard plunge in the second quarter and later set up a field goal with a 73-yard kickoff return.

Wilbur Jackson
San Francisco
Jackson's 123 yards complemented Delvin Williams's 110-yard output in a 10–7 victory over New Orleans. The two performances mark the first time this season that two running backs on the same NFC team have gone over 100 yards in the same game.

Greg Latta
Chicago
Trailing Kansas City 27–21, Chicago took over at its own 43 with 19 seconds to play. Quarterback Bob Avellini threw to Robin Earl for 20 yards, to the Chiefs' 37. He then sent Latta deep, and the third-year tight end scored the decisive touchdown with :03 left.

David Mays
Cleveland
Starting quarterback Brian Sipe was injured and left the game with Pittsburgh in the first quarter but Mays filled in well, throwing 32 times and completing 17 for 269 yards, including three fourth quarter touchdowns to Larry Poole in a desperate catch-up attempt.

Mark Moseley
Washington
Heroic stuff: Fourth and 11 at the Philadelphia 37, score 14–14, 3:41 left. George Allen: "What about it, Mark?" Moseley: "Yes." Redskins win, 17–14 on Moseley's 54-yard field goal, a team record. Moseley on Allen's call: "He knows when I feel good."

Haven Moses
Denver
With 1:36 remaining at San Diego and the Broncos trailing the Chargers 14–10, Moses caught an eight-yard pass from quarterback Craig Morton on fourth down and four. It was the second touchdown catch of the day for the former San Diego State wide receiver.

Reflections

Endangered species jokes aren't funny this week in Cleveland, Green Bay, Minnesota, and San Diego. NFL quarterbacks in those locations are seriously immobilized for the rest of the season.

The wounded of Week 9 include Cleveland's Brian Sipe, Green Bay's Lynn Dickey, Minnesota's Fran Tarkenton, and San Diego's Bill Munson. With the exception of Green Bay (2–7), each of those clubs' playoff hopes and plans are affected by the injuries.

The Packers were trailing Los Angeles 24–6 when Dickey was tackled by the Rams' Larry Brooks on the final play of the game. The veteran quarterback from Kansas State, injury-prone throughout his eight-year pro career, suffered a broken bone in his lower left leg and is lost for the season.

The Rams' win was their fiftieth under head coach Chuck Knox in his four-and-a-half-year tenure, making Knox the winningest coach in Los Angeles history. The Rams took this one methodically, moving ahead 17–0 at halftime with the help of a 47-yard fumble return by safety Dave Elmendorf and a 29-yard interception return by cornerback Pat Thomas.

Suddenly the sluggish NFC Western Division has taken on the look of a dogfight. Los Angeles (6–3) is being pursued by both Atlanta (5–4) and San Francisco (4–5), which has won four straight after dropping its first five. The 49ers defeated New Orleans 10–7 in the Superdome this week as Ray Wersching kicked a 33-yard field goal with 6:33 gone in the sudden death overtime period.

Minnesota quarterback Fran Tarkenton suffered a fracture of the right fibula (small bone of the lower leg) late in the third quarter of the Vikings' 42–10 win over Cincinnati. Though Tarkenton expressed hopes of being mobile in "six or eight weeks," club officials were doubtful about his ability to return this year.

Tarkenton's ownership of all major NFL career passing records is due in large part to his durability over the years. The rib injury that kept him from starting one game in 1976 was a first for the 17-year veteran. And on Sunday, before his leg injury occurred, Tarkenton had completed 17 of 18 passes for 195 yards (the 94 percent completion percentage bettered the NFL single-game record but the mark won't go into the record book since it fell short of the 20 attempts needed to qualify).

Cincinnati's loss to the Vikings drops the Bengals (4–5) a game off the pace in the NFL's most competitive division, the AFC Central. Cleveland and Pittsburgh, who share the division lead with 5–4 records, met in Pittsburgh's Three Rivers Stadium this week in another battle of the wounded quarterbacks.

Nursing a battered left arm, the Steelers' Terry Bradshaw passed for 283 yards and three touchdowns as the Steelers defeated the Browns 35–31. Bradshaw left the game in the fourth quarter with an injured shoulder, the same complaint that had sidelined (probably for the season) Cleveland's Sipe in the first period.

Sipe was replaced by David Mays, who staged a creditable three-touchdown rally in the fourth quarter with scoring passes of 5, 13, and 3 yards, all to Larry Poole.

At San Diego, starting quarterback James Harris left the game with Denver with a sprained ankle early in the fourth quarter. His replacement, Bill Munson, was hit while throwing his first pass, an interception. Munson suffered a broken left fibula and will be lost for the season.

After building a 14–3 halftime lead, the Chargers lost the game as well. Denver's quarterback Craig Morton threw two touchdown passes to Haven Moses in the second half, including an eight-yarder with 1:36 to play, on fourth-and-four. The 17–14 win kept the Broncos tied with Oakland for the AFC West lead with an 8–1 record.

Eight Is Enough

At 5–3, the St. Louis Cardinals were scuffling to stay in the race for the NFC wild card berth.

At 8–0, the Dallas Cowboys were the NFL's only remaining undefeated team and were enjoying a comfortable three-game lead over the Cardinals in the NFC's Eastern Division.

So this week's Monday night confrontation between the Cardinals and the Cowboys in Texas Stadium was a competitive natural. St. Louis's instinct for survival clashed with Dallas's desire to stay unblemished, and the main byproduct was a series of flareups that ended with a fourth quarter punchout.

In the end, survival triumphed over perfection. St. Louis's Jim Hart threw fourth quarter touchdown passes to Mel Gray and Jackie Smith to overcome a 14–10 Dallas lead and win 24–17. The Cardinals are two games off the pace with five to play and the Cowboys are suddenly mortal.

Thomas Croke

Dolphins' Tim Foley (25) and Curtis Johnson (45) foil Patriots' rookie tight end Don Hasselbeck.

Russ Reed

Above, Raiders corner Oilers' Carpenter.
Below, Payton eludes K.C. defenders in Bears' comeback.

Don Lansu

David Boss

Denver's Morton celebrates winning TD against Chargers.

Hugh Jones

Above, Bucs' Pear sacks Giants' Pisarcik.
Below, Colts' Dutton jars Bills' Ferguson.

Robert Shaver

Numbers

Standings

AFC East	W	L	T	Pct.	Pts.	OP
Baltimore	8	1	0	.889	203	128
Miami	7	2	0	.778	183	126
New England	5	4	0	.556	190	154
Buffalo	2	7	0	.222	112	208
N.Y. Jets	2	7	0	.222	133	190
AFC Central						
Cleveland	5	4	0	.556	200	175
Pittsburgh	5	4	0	.556	182	164
Cincinnati	4	5	0	.444	125	167
Houston	4	5	0	.444	189	145
AFC West						
Denver	8	1	0	.889	186	91
Oakland	8	1	0	.889	240	152
San Diego	4	5	0	.444	125	129
Seattle	3	6	0	.333	170	241
Kansas City	2	7	0	.222	140	219
NFC East	**W**	**L**	**T**	**Pct.**	**Pts.**	**OP**
Dallas	8	1	0	.889	238	122
St. Louis	6	3	0	.667	203	146
Washington	5	4	0	.556	126	132
N.Y. Giants	4	5	0	.444	111	178
Philadelphia	3	6	0	.333	140	134
NFC Central						
Minnesota	6	3	0	.667	140	128
Chicago	4	5	0	.444	171	213
Detroit	4	5	0	.444	110	164
Green Bay	2	7	0	.222	83	152
Tampa Bay	0	9	0	.000	46	159
NFC West						
Los Angeles	6	3	0	.667	213	98
Atlanta	5	4	0	.556	90	62
San Francisco	4	5	0	.444	114	134
New Orleans	2	7	0	.222	160	212

Scores

American Football Conference
Baltimore 31, Buffalo 13
Denver 17, San Diego 14
Miami 17, New England 5
Oakland 34, Houston 29
Pittsburgh 35, Cleveland 31
Seattle 17, New York Jets 0

National Football Conference
Atlanta 17, Detroit 6
Los Angeles 24, Green Bay 6
New York Giants 10, Tampa Bay 0
San Francisco 10, New Orleans 7, overtime
St. Louis 24, Dallas 17
Washington 17, Philadelphia 14

Interconference Games
Chicago 28, Kansas City 27
Minnesota 42, Cincinnati 10
AFC, 11 victories; NFC, 3 victories

Newsmakers

Houston rookie running back **Rob Carpenter** turned in his first 100-plus day as a pro with 120 yards in 19 carries against Oakland. **Walter Payton** of Chicago had 192 yards, putting him over 1,000 for the second year in a row. **Chuck Foreman** of Minnesota rushed 29 times for 133 yards and two touchdowns.

Oakland's **Clifford Branch** caught eight passes for 115 yards in the win over Houston. **Brent McClanahan** of Minnesota caught eight for 87 yards and one touchdown. Kansas City's **Walter White** caught seven for 92 yards.

Seattle's **Jim Zorn** completed 16 of 37 passes for 219 yards. Oakland's **Ken Stabler** was 23 for 31 for 261 yards and two touchdowns.

Week 10

The Tenth Week, November 20, 1977

People

Raymond Burks
Kansas City
The rookie linebacker from UCLA carried a fake punt 51 yards to Denver's 1-yard line with two minutes to play and the Chiefs trailing 14–7. But the Broncos' defense pushed Kansas City back to the 7 and averted an overtime period to stay atop the AFC West.

Franco Harris
Pittsburgh
After the Steelers had spotted Dallas a 6–0 lead on Tony Dorsett's 13-yard touchdown run, Harris took the ball on the next play from scrimmage and went 61 yards to tie the score. Harris rushed for a career high 179 yards and scored again on a two-yard run.

Bert Jones
Baltimore
The NFL's most valuable player for 1976 completed 23 of 36 passing attempts for 322 yards, including touchdowns of 53, 33, and 28 yards, in the Colts' 33–12 win over the New York Jets. In the first half, Jones put together 11 completions in a row.

Archie Manning
New Orleans
Playing for the first time in four weeks, the Saints' quarterback threw two touchdown passes to Henry Childs, including a 16-yarder with just over a minute to play, in a 21–20 victory over Atlanta, the highest point output against the Falcons this year.

Jim Otis
St. Louis
Now relegated to playing backup, Otis filled in for injured Wayne Morris and scored two touchdowns in a 21–16 win over the Eagles. Otis's second score, a one-yard plunge, came with 38 seconds to play and provided the margin of victory.

Bob Trumpy
Cincinnati
The flea-flicker is back! With 2:35 to play, the Bengals scored on a triple-reverse pass, Ken Anderson throwing to Trumpy for the winning points against Miami. "I drop it and I'm looking for a job sweeping floors," said the 31-year-old tight end.

Reflections

Picture Chicago Bears guard Revie Sorey batting Minnesota Vikings linebacker Wally Hilgenberg into row 13 of Soldier Field. That done, picture Walter Payton sprinting through the hole for a 58-yard gain, deep into Vikings' territory. Picture it. Payton did it in the process of accumulating 275 yards rushing, an NFL single game record.

Payton went four yards on a play late in the game (won by Chicago 10–7) to eclipse O.J. Simpson's mark of 273 yards set last Thanksgiving against the Detroit Lions.

Payton had suffered from chills and a slight flu earlier in the week and said that he felt hot and cold flashes during the game. "I didn't think I could put on a Walter Payton performance when I left the dressing room for the game," he remarked afterward. But he carried the ball 40 times, averaging almost seven yards per attempt.

Aside from Payton's mark, the most significant achievement for the Bears is that they've narrowed the gap between themselves and the Central Division-leading Vikings to a single game. "I haven't had time to think about the record," Payton said in the locker room. "I had no idea I was anywhere near it. I don't like my teammates running up to me and telling me I've done this or that. It breaks my concentration."

As usual, Payton deflected much of the acclaim to his offensive line. "Anyone could run behind them," he said of guards Sorey and Noah Jackson, tackles Ted Albrecht and Dennis Lick, center Dan Peiffer, and tight end Greg Latta.

Payton's season total is now 1,404 yards, ahead of Simpson's pace when the Buffalo running back set his single season record of 2,003.

While the NFC Central race tightened the NFC West came to a curious juncture. Division leader Los Angeles traveled to San Francisco to play the 49ers, who, dizzy from a four-game winning streak, now found themselves entertaining dreams of contention. The 49ers opened the season with five straight losses and became the institution Bay Area fans loved to scowl at.

The popular and recently departed 49ers head coach, Monte Clark, has been appearing on local television to advertise the Bay Area Rapid Transit System (BART). Plugging the system's new Saturday service, Clark quips, "Of course, BART still isn't working on Sundays, but then I'm not either."

Gallows humor is appropriate for the 49ers, who controlled the ball two-thirds of the first half against the Rams but were down by 14 points less than a minute into the third quarter. Los Angeles opened the second half with Wendell Tyler reversing to running mate Jim Jodat for a 43-yard kickoff return. Two plays later Lawrence McCutcheon went 42 yards, the longest touchdown run of his career, and the Rams led 17–3. In the fourth period, quarterback Pat Haden spliced together a 67-yard drive that ended with Rafael Septien's 25-yard field goal. From there, the Rams, with timely defensive play by Larry Brooks and Jack (Hacksaw) Reynolds, frustrated the 49ers' comeback efforts. Los Angeles won 23–10 and San Francisco's bid to congest the West was over.

Meanwhile, Archie Manning and the New Orleans Saints were giving the Rams a hand. Manning's last-minute touchdown pass to tight end Henry Childs gave the Saints a 21–20 victory over the Atlanta Falcons. It was the second time the Manning-Childs combination worked for the Saints, who came from a 20–7 halftime deficit to knock the Falcons (5–5) two games behind Los Angeles with four to play.

But Seriously, Folks...

Humor is often, if not always, rooted in misfortune, so it figures that Tampa Bay head coach John McKay is the NFL's leading funny man. This week he prefaced the Buccaneers' game against Detroit by saying, "We couldn't score against a stiff wind," which had everyone north of the Everglades slapping their thighs and convulsing all over the place—until somebody noticed that the game would be played in the Pontiac Silverdome, where wind is non-existent. Ha ha.

Even funnier, Tampa Bay led the Lions at halftime 7–0 and was ahead 7–3 going into the fourth quarter. The Detroit crowd of 50,000 was cheering wildly—for the Buccaneers.

But reserve quarterback Gary Danielson came off the bench and rallied the Lions to a 16–7 victory. It was the twenty-fourth loss in the short history of the Tampa Bay franchise, which has yet to win a game. McKay's 0–24 record moves him ahead of Phil Handler, whose work with the 1943–45 Cardinals had distinguished him as the coach with the longest losing streak in National Football League history . . . until Sunday.

Michael Zagaris

Los Angeles's Jack (Hacksaw) Reynolds (64) and Carl Eckern (55) stop San Francisco's Bob Ferrell short of the goal line during second quarter of Rams' 23–10 win over their NFC West rivals.

Peter Read Miller

George Gojkovich

Above, Chargers' Don Goode smacks Raiders' Davis. Below, Bears' Payton en route to 275-yard record.

Above, Cowboys' Dorsett slithers among Steelers. Below, Patriots' Calhoun vaults over Bills.

Don Lansu

Robert L. Smith

Numbers

Standings

AFC East	W	L	T	Pct.	Pts.	OP
Baltimore	9	1	0	.900	236	140
Miami	7	3	0	.700	200	149
New England	6	4	0	.600	210	161
Buffalo	2	8	0	.200	119	228
N.Y. Jets	2	8	0	.200	145	223
AFC Central						
Cleveland	6	4	0	.600	221	182
Pittsburgh	6	4	0	.600	210	177
Cincinnati	5	5	0	.500	148	184
Houston	5	5	0	.500	211	155
AFC West						
Denver	9	1	0	.900	200	98
Oakland	8	2	0	.800	247	164
San Diego	5	5	0	.500	137	136
Seattle	3	7	0	.300	180	263
Kansas City	2	8	0	.200	147	233
NFC East	**W**	**L**	**T**	**Pct.**	**Pts.**	**OP**
Dallas	8	2	0	.800	251	150
St. Louis	7	3	0	.700	224	162
Washington	6	4	0	.600	136	141
N.Y. Giants	4	6	0	.400	118	199
Philadelphia	3	7	0	.300	156	155
NFC Central						
Minnesota	6	4	0	.600	147	138
Chicago	5	5	0	.500	181	220
Detroit	5	5	0	.500	126	171
Green Bay	2	8	0	.200	92	162
Tampa Bay	0	10	0	.000	53	175
NFC West						
Los Angeles	7	3	0	.700	236	108
Atlanta	5	5	0	.500	110	83
San Francisco	4	6	0	.400	124	157
New Orleans	3	7	0	.300	181	232

Scores

American Football Conference
Baltimore 33, New York Jets 12
Cincinnati 23, Miami 17
Denver 14, Kansas City 7
Houston 22, Seattle 10
New England 20, Buffalo 7
San Diego 21, Oakland 7

National Football Conference
Chicago 10, Minnesota 7
Detroit 16, Tampa Bay 7
Los Angeles 23, San Francisco 10
New Orleans 21, Atlanta 20
St. Louis 21, Philadelphia 16
Washington 10, Green Bay 9

Interconference Games
Cleveland 21, New York Giants 7
Pittsburgh 28, Dallas 13
AFC, 15 victories; NFC, 3 victories

Newsmakers

Atlanta's **Woody Thompson** rushed 24 times for 123 yards, a career high. Miami's rookie **Leroy Harris** carried 20 times for 108 yards against Cincinnati. **Lawrence McCutcheon** had a 42-yard touchdown run en route to a 100-yard day against San Francisco. For the 49ers, **Delvin Williams** had 98 yards in 22 carries, including a touchdown.

Jim Hart threw a 69-yard touchdown pass to **Mel Gray,** part of a 240-yard day against Philadelphia. The Eagles' **Ron Jaworski** responded with 16 for 30 and 211 yards, including two touchdowns.

Baltimore running back **Lydell Mitchell** caught nine passes for 90 yards, including a 28-yard touchdown.

Week 11

The Eleventh Week, November 27, 1977

People

Billy Brooks
Cincinnati
On the first play from scrimmage against the New York Giants, Brooks caught a 58-yard bomb from Ken Anderson to give the Bengals a quick lead. Later in the first quarter, the Anderson-to-Brooks combination scored again, this time on a 30-yarder.

Clarence Chapman
New Orleans
The second-year cornerback and return specialist helped the Saints build a 17–3 second quarter lead against San Francisco with a 92-yard kickoff return for a touchdown. It was the highlight of the day for New Orleans, as the 49ers won 20–17.

Dan Fouts
San Diego
After a long holdout and weeks of seclusion in Bend, Oregon, Fouts rejoined the Chargers and led the club to a 30–28 win over Seattle. The fifth-year quarterback completed 19 of 26 passes for 199 yards and a touchdown to wide receiver Charlie Joiner.

Tom Jackson
Denver
The Broncos were leading Baltimore 14–13 with 7:20 to play when Jackson, a fifth-year linebacker from Louisville, picked off Bert Jones's short pass and raced 73 yards for a touchdown. It was the longest interception return in the club's 18-year history.

Billy Waddy
Los Angeles
The diminutive rookie wide receiver and return man from Colorado led the Rams' pass-catching corps with six receptions for 68 yards, including a 10-yarder from Pat Haden on fourth and three that set up a field goal in a 9–0 win over Cleveland.

Jim Zorn
Seattle
Zorn answered Fouts's passing display by completing 16 of 26 for 291 yards and four touchdowns in the Seahawks' loss to the Chargers. Zorn put Seattle ahead 21–13 early in the second half with a 74-yard scoring pass to Steve Largent.

Reflections

"Kept their playoff hopes alive" is the all-purpose phrase of the week. As in, "The Dolphins buried the Cardinals 55–14 Thanksgiving Day and kept their playoff hopes alive."

(St. Louis's playoff hopes, incidentally, are still alive . . . but more of that in a moment.)

What kept the Dolphins' playoff hopes alive was a masterful passing performance by Miami quarterback Bob Griese. The bespectacled one threw six touchdown passes, one short of an NFL record, and finished the day with 15 completions in 23 attempts for 207 yards. Three of the scoring passes went to wide receiver Nat Moore, who had seven catches in all.

In fact, the Dolphins' entire attack confounded the Cardinals, who yielded an additional 295 yards on the ground. Running back Gary Davis had 104 of those, on 20 carries. Contrast that with St. Louis's top gainer, Terry Metcalf, who had 28 yards on nine carries. Altogether, the Cardinals had 54 yards rushing.

Having ruined the Cardinals' Thanksgiving, the Dolphins had only to gather around their television sets Sunday afternoon to watch Denver move them another half-game closer to the AFC East-leading Baltimore Colts. The Colts fell behind 14–0 in the first half on touchdown passes from Craig Morton to Rick Upchurch (41 yards) and Jack Dolbin (19 yards). But two long field goals by Toni Linhart and a 15-yard pass from Bert Jones to Lydell Mitchell pulled the Colts within 14–13 at the end of three periods.

Then, midway through the fourth quarter, with the Colts driving, Denver linebacker Tom Jackson picked off Jones's pass to Don McCauley in the flat and went 73 yards for a touchdown. In a year of "firsts" and "bests" for the Broncos, it was the longest interception return in club history.

"Jones was gaining confidence in the flat pass," Jackson said later. "I just decided to come underneath. I don't think Bert ever saw me."

Another interception and a long return, this one a 59-yarder by cornerback Louis Wright, set up Denver's final touchdown. The Broncos' 27–13 victory gave them a 10–1 record, best in the NFL.

In another playoff-related game, Dallas scored two touchdowns in the second half to overcome a 7–0 Washington lead and defeat the Redskins 14–7. The loss put the Redskins (6–5) closer to the edge of extinction in the race for the NFC wild card berth and gave St. Louis (7–4) a measure of breathing room.

The respite will last less than a week, however, as the Cardinals must face Washington next Saturday. The Redskins defeated the Cardinals when the teams played at RFK Stadium in the third week.

Dallas defensive end Harvey Martin had some words of instruction for the Redskins. "This game is played in two halves," said Martin. "If you go into the locker room and you start thinking you've got it, you lose." In each of their nine wins, the Cowboys have outscored their opponents in the second half.

The New England Patriots (7–4) sacked Ron Jaworski eight times in a 14–6 win over Philadelphia, keeping the Patriots' playoff hopes alive, albeit in intensive care.

Cats and Dogs

The screeching and clawing and kicking and howling you hear is only the AFC Central Division in another of its routine weekly melees. Cleveland (6–5) dropped out of first place with a 9–0 loss to Los Angeles, while the other three members of the division won.

Pittsburgh (7–4) survived stiff opposition from the New York Jets for a 23–20 victory as Roy Gerela's 37-yard field goal with 5:58 left provided the winning points. Jets quarterbacks Matt Robinson and Richard Todd were intercepted a total of five times.

Despite 20-degree temperatures and a hoary snowstorm, Cincinnati's Ken Anderson came out throwing. His 58-yard scoring bomb to Billy Brooks on the first play opened up a 30–13 win over the New York Giants. The Bengals (6–5) led 27–6 at halftime, due in part to two more scoring passes to Brooks (30 yards) and Jim Corbett (47 yards).

Houston's 34–20 win over Kansas City also was the result of a passing display, this one by Dan Pastorini. The Oilers' quarterback threw three scoring passes, two to Ken Burrough, as Houston (6–5) kept pace with Cleveland and Cincinnati. Another first-play gambit, Pastorini-to-Burrough for 48 yards, put the Oilers on the board quickly.

Schedule-watchers are already paying close attention to week 13, which features Pittsburgh at Cincinnati. Cleveland and Houston are interested, too. But all must play three more games, and according to rule one on page one of the standard coaches' quotebook, the remaining games must be played one at a time.

Vernon Biever

A genuine chiller at Green Bay: Packers' rookie quarterback David Whitehurst drops back during 13–6 loss to Minnesota. Vikings stayed on top of NFC Central by overcoming the all-day blizzard.

Robert L. Smith

George Goljkovich

Above, Bills' Chandler (81) meets Raiders' Hall. Below, Eagles' Jaworski is sacked by a Patriot.

Above, Rams' Haden cranks up against Cleveland. Below, Broncos' Perrin eyes daylight against Colts.

Thomas Croke

Peter Read Miller

Numbers

Standings

AFC East	W	L	T	Pct.	Pts.	OP
Baltimore	9	2	0	.818	249	167
Miami	8	3	0	.727	255	163
New England	7	4	0	.636	224	167
Buffalo	2	9	0	.182	132	262
N.Y. Jets	2	9	0	.182	165	246
AFC Central						
Pittsburgh	7	4	0	.636	233	197
Cincinnati	6	5	0	.545	178	197
Cleveland	6	5	0	.545	221	191
Houston	6	5	0	.545	245	175
AFC West						
Denver	10	1	0	.909	227	111
Oakland	9	2	0	.818	281	177
San Diego	6	5	0	.545	167	164
Seattle	3	8	0	.273	208	293
Kansas City	2	9	0	.182	167	267
NFC East	**W**	**L**	**T**	**Pct.**	**Pts.**	**OP**
Dallas	9	2	0	.818	265	157
St. Louis	7	4	0	.636	238	217
Washington	6	5	0	.545	143	155
N.Y. Giants	4	7	0	.364	131	229
Philadelphia	3	8	0	.273	162	169
NFC Central						
Minnesota	7	4	0	.636	160	144
Chicago	6	5	0	.545	212	234
Detroit	5	6	0	.455	140	202
Green Bay	2	9	0	.182	98	175
Tampa Bay	0	11	0	.000	53	192
NFC West						
Los Angeles	8	3	0	.727	245	108
Atlanta	6	5	0	.545	127	83
San Francisco	5	6	0	.455	144	174
New Orleans	3	8	0	.273	198	252

Scores

American Football Conference
Denver 27, Baltimore 13
Houston 34, Kansas City 20
Oakland 34, Buffalo 13
Pittsburgh 23, New York Jets 20
San Diego 30, Seattle 28

National Football Conference
Atlanta 17, Tampa Bay 0
Chicago 31, Detroit 14
Dallas 14, Washington 7
Minnesota 13, Green Bay 6
San Francisco 20, New Orleans 17

Interconference Games
Cincinnati 30, New York Giants 13
Los Angeles 9, Cleveland 0
Miami 55, St. Louis 14
New England 14, Philadelphia 6
AFC, 16 victories; NFC, 4 victories

Newsmakers

Franco Harris's 83 yards rushing gave him 6,082 for his career, making him the third back in NFL history to go over 6,000 yards in his first six seasons. Harris joins **Jim Brown** and **O.J. Simpson** in this category. Another record setter, Chicago's **Walter Payton,** continued his quest for Simpson's single-season total yardage mark with 137 against Detroit. And San Francisco's **Wilbur Jackson** had to leave the game with New Orleans early in the fourth quarter after piling up 190 yards and two touchdowns on a total of 16 carries.

Chicago's **Bob Avellini** completed 14 passes in 21 attempts for 260 yards and two touchdowns.

Baltimore running backs **Don McCauley** and **Lydell Mitchell** had 11 and 9 catches, respectively.

Week 12

The Twelfth Week, December 4, 1977

People

Tony Dorsett
Dallas
"I felt it coming. It was a matter of time before I broke one," said the Cowboys' rookie running back. Dorsett carried 23 times for 206 yards, including an 84-yard touchdown, longest in the NFL this season. He needs 135 yards in the last two games to reach 1,000.

Leroy Harris
Miami
With 7:42 remaining and the Dolphins leading Baltimore 10–6 in a Monday night showdown, Harris raced 77 yards for the insurance touchdown that moved Miami into a tie with the Colts for the lead in the AFC East. Harris finished the evening with 140 yards.

Monte Jackson
Los Angeles
For the second week in a row, the all-pro cornerback intercepted two passes as the Rams defeated Oakland to clinch the NFC West title. Jackson returned the first pickoff 33 yards, then stopped a threat with an end zone interception on the Raiders' next possession.

Dave Williams
San Francisco
Released by Dallas earlier in the season, Williams caught on with the 49ers and this week returned the second half kickoff 80 yards for a touchdown at Minnesota. Williams set up another touchdown with a 60-yard punt return in the 49ers' last-minute loss.

Tommy Kramer
Minnesota
The rookie quarterback from Rice threw three second half touchdown passes, including a 69-yarder to Sammy White with 1:38 to play, as he directed a 28–27 win over San Francisco. Kramer came in with the Vikings seemingly out of contention trailing 24–7.

Robert (Red) Miller
Denver
The Broncos (11–1) clinched the AFC West title this week and first-year head coach Miller said, "We're in the playoffs and for the first time this season I'm ready to talk about them. When I took this job my objective was to win the respect of the other teams."

Reflections

The Los Angeles Rams are champions of the NFC West. If anything is certain in the NFL this week, it's that the Rams did not back into their fifth consecutive divisional title.

Los Angeles defeated world champion Oakland 20–14 on the strength of an extremely durable defensive effort and just a little flash toward the end. Trailing 14–13 late in the fourth quarter, quarterback Pat Haden threw 43 yards to wide receiver Harold Jackson for the winning points. From there, the Rams' defense, featuring key sacks by Jack Youngblood and Mike Fanning, denied Raiders quarterback Ken Stabler his patented cool-cat-look-'em-in-the-face-and-throw-it-right-by-'em finish.

Playing with a knee injury sustained two weeks earlier against San Diego, Stabler characterized the overall condition of the Raiders. Besides exploiting Stabler's immobility, the Rams were able to pick on the Oakland defense where it hurt the most: in the secondary.

Cornerback Neal Colzie was absent from the starting lineup and strong safety George Atkinson left the game in the first quarter with an ankle injury. So Skip Thomas moved from corner to Atkinson's spot and head coach John Madden sent in rookie Lester Hayes, the kick returner deluxe, to play in Thomas's place.

When it came time for Haden and the Rams to respond to the Stabler-to-Dave Casper touchdown pass that gave the Raiders their brief 14–13 lead, they went directly at Hayes. Jackson made his winning touchdown catch two yards behind the twisting rookie.

Another NFC West team was involved in a thrilling finish this week, but with a different result. After building a 24–0 lead, San Francisco bowed under the strain of a Minnesota rally and lost 28–27. The Vikings trailed 24–7 early in the fourth quarter when quarterback Bob Lee was removed for rookie Tommy Kramer. Kramer threw touchdown passes to Ahmad Rashad and Bob Tucker and then, with 1:38 to play, unloaded a 69-yarder to Sammy White for the winning touchdown. "When you go in there you gotta think you're hot," Kramer said later.

The Denver Broncos had some fun in the Astrodome, defeating Houston 24–14 to extend their record to 11–1. They had some more fun on the flight home when the announcement was made that the Rams had beaten the Raiders, giving the Broncos the AFC West title and the first playoff berth in the team's history. When the news came, linebacker Bob Swenson punctuated the celebration by shouting that the team ought to hijack the plane, fly to Los Angeles, and congratulate the Rams personally.

"It's been a long time for the Denver Broncos but it's been an even longer time for Craig Morton," said the former Dallas and New York Giants quarterback who has been the offensive glue for the Broncos this season. Playing despite a strained shoulder, Morton threw touchdown passes to Riley Odoms and Rick Upchurch in a second-quarter surge that led to Denver's victory.

Elsewhere in the state of Texas, Tony Dorsett was running all over, around, and sometimes through the Philadelphia Eagles, leading Dallas to a 24–14 win that sealed the championship of the NFC's Eastern Division. It was the first time the 1976 Heisman trophy winner had gone over 200 yards. His total of 206 included an 84-yard sprint for a touchdown, longest in the NFL this year.

"I hope to have more days like this," said Dorsett, who needs 135 yards in the last two games for a 1,000-yard season. "I want to be known as an all-around running back. I want to be able to run, catch, and block."

Back on Top

The coaching career of Don Shula, to borrow a phrase from one of the Monday night voices, has been well-documented elsewhere. But at this juncture in the 1977 NFL season, it was not expected that Shula's young and rebuilding Miami Dolphins would be in playoff contention—certainly not with five rookies in their defensive lineup.

At the end of 12 weeks, the Dolphins are tied for the division lead with Baltimore, at 9–3, arriving at the top by defeating the Colts 17–6 in a Monday night game at the Orange Bowl.

A 77-yard touchdown run by Leroy Harris with 7:42 remaining provided the insurance points for the Dolphins, who had clung to a 10–6 halftime lead. Harris started up the middle but bounced to the outside, picked up help from wide receivers Duriel Harris and Nat Moore, and was off. "I was looking for a filling station to gas up," joked the rookie running back from Arkansas State, who was playing with a pulled leg muscle.

It was the longest run in Miami's history. "I'd hate to see him healthy," deadpanned Shula.

David Boss

Rams' Harold Jackson gets behind Raiders' Lester Hayes (37) for deciding touchdown in 20–14 win.

T. K. Makita

St. Louis's playoff chances narrow as Larry Csonka carries for Giants in 27–7 upset of Cardinals.

Fred Anderson

Sammy White's touchdown catch in final minutes gives Vikings a 28–27 come-from-behind win over 49ers.

Below, Steelers' Lambert clamps Seahawks' Smith.

George Gojkovich

Below, Houston's Burrough shines in loss to Denver.

Lou Witt

Numbers

Standings

AFC East	W	L	T	Pct.	Pts.	OP
Baltimore	9	3	0	.750	255	184
Miami	9	3	0	.750	272	169
New England	8	4	0	.667	240	177
N.Y. Jets	3	9	0	.250	181	259
Buffalo	2	10	0	.167	132	272
AFC Central						
Pittsburgh	8	4	0	.667	263	217
Cincinnati	7	5	0	.583	205	204
Cleveland	6	6	0	.500	235	228
Houston	6	6	0	.500	259	199
AFC West						
Denver*	11	1	0	.917	251	125
Oakland	9	3	0	.750	295	197
San Diego	7	5	0	.583	204	178
Seattle	3	9	0	.250	228	323
Kansas City	2	10	0	.167	174	294
NFC East	**W**	**L**	**T**	**Pct.**	**Pts.**	**OP**
Dallas*	10	2	0	.833	289	171
St. Louis	7	5	0	.583	245	244
Washington	7	5	0	.583	153	155
N.Y. Giants	5	7	0	.417	158	236
Philadelphia	3	9	0	.250	176	193
NFC Central						
Minnesota	8	4	0	.667	188	171
Chicago	7	5	0	.583	222	234
Detroit	5	7	0	.417	149	212
Green Bay	3	9	0	.250	108	184
Tampa Bay	0	12	0	.000	53	202
NFC West						
Los Angeles*	9	3	0	.750	265	122
Atlanta	6	6	0	.500	137	99
San Francisco	5	7	0	.417	171	202
New Orleans	3	9	0	.250	211	268

*Clinched division title

Scores

American Football Conference

Cincinnati 27, Kansas City 7
Denver 24, Houston 14
Miami 27, Baltimore 6
Pittsburgh 30, Seattle 20
San Diego 37, Cleveland 14

National Football Conference

Chicago 10, Tampa Bay 0
Dallas 24, Philadelphia 14
Green Bay 10, Detroit 9
Minnesota 28, San Francisco 27
New York Giants 27, St. Louis 7

Interconference Games

Los Angeles 20, Oakland 14
New England 16, Atlanta 10
New York Jets 16, New Orleans 13
Washington 10, Buffalo 0
AFC, 18 victories; NFC, 6 victories

Newsmakers

San Francisco's **Delvin Williams** rushed for 107 yards and scored two touchdowns in the 49ers' narrow loss to Minnesota. **Chuck Muncie** had 107 yards in New Orleans's loss to the New York Jets.

San Diego's **Dan Fouts** proved that his triumphant return from hiding last week was no fluke, completing 14 of 20 for 237 yards and three touchdowns in the Chargers' victory over Cleveland.

Minnesota's **Ahmad Rashad** and Chicago's **James Scott** are this week's leading receivers, with seven catches . Rashad scored one touchdown, as did teammate **Brent McClanahan,** who caught six.

Week 13

The Thirteenth Week, December 11, 1977

People

Bob Baumhower
Miami
The rookie nose tackle, a regular starter with the Dolphins, was credited with 17 tackles and recovered two fumbles as the Dolphins lost to New England 14–10. Baumhower and A. J. Duhe, another rookie, comprise two thirds of the Miami defensive line.

Bob Chandler
Buffalo
The Bills are going nowhere but Chandler stands second among AFC receivers with 53 catches. He picked up seven this week for a total of 108 yards and two touchdowns, the second an 11-yarder from Joe Ferguson with 40 seconds to play that beat the Jets 14–10.

Billy Kilmer
Washington
Last of the great single-bar facemask quarterbacks, Kilmer returned from an injury with all his customary macho: a 14 for 28 passing performance, including one touchdown, plus a hobbling 12-yard run to maintain the final scoring drive in a win over St. Louis.

Lawrence McCutcheon
Los Angeles
The Rams' running back broke Dick Bass's club career rushing record by 81 yards, reaching 5,498 with 152 yards against Atlanta. When the big moment occurred, Bass, now a Rams' radio commentator, did an on-the-field interview, a violation of NFL rules.

Pat McInally
Cincinnati
"My assignment was to run deep and distract them," said the wide receiver. The primary receiver was fullback Pete Johnson, but Ken Anderson found McInally and hit him with a 43-yard pass that beat Pittsburgh and preserved Cincinnati's playoff hopes.

Wilbert Montgomery
Philadelphia
Big plays and playing time for new faces are the order of the day, now that the Eagles are out of contention. Montgomery, a rookie from Abilene Christian, returned the second half kickoff 99 yards for a touchdown during a 17–14 win over the Giants.

Reflections

Now pay close attention. Week 13 is full of nuances. First, focus on the NFC.

It has come down to three teams fighting for two remaining playoff spots: Minnesota, Chicago, and Washington, all with 8–5 records. Dallas has clinched the East. Los Angeles is the champion of the West. Listen. The final stages of the elimination process are beginning to hum.

If Minnesota, Chicago, and Washington all finish 9–5, the Vikings are champions of the NFC Central Division and the Redskins and Bears match their intraconference point differentials (i.e., the difference between points scored and opponents' points in NFC games) to decide who gets the conference wild card playoff berth.

On the other hand, if Washington and Minnesota finish 8–6 and Chicago finishes 9–5 or 8–6, the Bears are NFC Central champions and the Redskins match their NFC point differential with that of the Vikings. The key to the Bears' advantage here is that Minnesota's final game is with Detroit and a Vikings loss would give the *intradivisional* edge to the Bears.

Yes, it's almost playoff time, which means double-duty for pocket calculators across the land as followers of the NFL try to match wits with the league's system of determining division champions and wild card teams.

The NFC scramble was pared to the above three teams by virtue of Los Angeles's 23–7 victory over Atlanta and Washington's 26–20 defeat of St. Louis in this week's action.

The Rams' victory was a personal celebration for running back Lawrence McCutcheon, whose 152 yards rushing gave him 5,498 for his career, eclipsing Dick Bass's club record by 81 yards. McCutcheon also broke his own single-season club record by reaching 1,213 yards, 45 more than he gained in 1976.

The return of Billy Kilmer as its starting quarterback and Mark Moseley's four field goals in four attempts were Washington's chief offensive weapons in its win over the Cardinals. St. Louis's Jim Hart was intercepted three times. The key pickoff, by kick return specialist Eddie Brown, came with 1:14 to play. Brown had been inserted as the fifth back in the Redskins' "nickel defense."

Chicago stayed alive with a 21–10 conquest of Green Bay. The Bears showed they were serious about the playoffs, using Walter Payton in the kickoff return unit. Meanwhile, the Vikings were setting the stage for week 14 by losing to Oakland 35–13.

In the AFC, playoff complexities abound. Without laboring the tie-breaking structure, suffice it to say that as a result of this week's action five teams are in the running for two remaining playoff berths. Denver has clinched the AFC West and Oakland (10–3) is the wild card entry no matter what happens next week.

Cincinnati and Pittsburgh, both 8–5, are in contention for the Central Division title. The Bengals brought this about with a 17–10 win over the Steelers Saturday afternoon at Riverfront Stadium. Ken Anderson's 43-yard touchdown pass to secondary receiver Pat McInally was the difference, and the seven-point winning margin gave the Bengals a one-point edge in games against the Steelers this season. This is important, in that Cincinnati needs only to win at Houston next week to assure itself of the division title.

Finally, there's the AFC East. Volumes may yet be written on how Baltimore's last-second 13–10 loss to Detroit puts the Colts in better shape than they'd be in if they'd won, but there it is.

The other two teams in contention are Miami and New England. If the Colts beat the Patriots next week in Baltimore, the Colts are in. If Miami beats Buffalo and the Patriots beat the Colts, the Dolphins are in. But in order for the Patriots to win the division title, they must beat or tie the Colts and the Bills must beat the Dolphins.

Even More Amazing!

The Tampa Bay Buccaneers, an NFL team, defeated the New Orleans Saints, also of the NFL, in a regularly scheduled game in the Louisiana Superdome this week, by the score of 33–14.

It was Tampa Bay's first victory in 27 regular season attempts.

Appropriately, the defense-minded Buccaneers scored three times on returned interceptions, tieing an NFL record.

After the game, Buccaneers' head coach John McKay indulged in that universal symbol of conquest, the cigar, and told some more Tampa Bay jokes.

Recalling that Archie Manning, the Saints' quarterback, had said beforehand that it would be disgraceful to be the first team to lose to Tampa Bay, McKay said, "If we can get some more guys to make statements like that..."

Frank Rippon

Dallas's Tony Dorsett cuts through San Francisco defenders during Cowboys' 42–35 victory.

Alex Barkoff

Jeris White rejoices over an NFL first as Tampa Bay breaks into the "W" column in New Orleans.

T. K. Makita

Don Lansu

Above, Dolphins' Baumhower atop Patriots' Calhoun. Above, Bears' Scott beats Packers' Buchanon. Below, Lemar Parrish's interception return gives Bengals an early lead in a win over Pittsburgh.

Chance Brockway

Numbers

Standings

AFC East	W	L	T	Pct.	Pts.	OP
Baltimore	9	4	0	.692	265	197
Miami	9	4	0	.692	282	183
New England	9	4	0	.692	254	187
N.Y. Jets	3	10	0	.231	191	273
Buffalo	3	10	0	.231	146	282
AFC Central						
Cincinnati	8	5	0	.615	222	214
Pittsburgh	8	5	0	.615	273	234
Houston	7	6	0	.538	278	214
Cleveland	6	7	0	.462	250	247
AFC West						
Denver*	12	1	0	.923	268	134
Oakland	10	3	0	.769	330	210
San Diego	7	6	0	.538	213	195
Seattle	4	9	0	.308	262	354
Kansas City	2	11	0	.154	205	328
NFC East	**W**	**L**	**T**	**Pct.**	**Pts.**	**OP**
Dallas*	11	2	0	.846	331	206
Washington	8	5	0	.615	179	175
St. Louis	7	6	0	.538	265	270
N.Y. Giants	5	8	0	.385	172	253
Philadelphia	4	9	0	.308	193	207
NFC Central						
Minnesota	8	5	0	.615	201	206
Chicago	8	5	0	.615	243	244
Detroit	6	7	0	.462	162	222
Green Bay	3	10	0	.231	118	205
Tampa Bay	1	12	0	.077	86	216
NFC West						
Los Angeles*	10	3	0	.769	288	129
Atlanta	6	7	0	.462	144	122
San Francisco	5	8	0	.385	206	244
New Orleans	3	10	0	.231	225	301

*Clinched division title

Scores

American Football Conference

Buffalo 14, New York Jets 10
Cincinnati 17, Pittsburgh 10
Denver 17, San Diego 9
Houston 19, Cleveland 15
New England 14, Miami 10
Seattle 34, Kansas City 31

National Football Conference

Chicago 21, Green Bay 10
Dallas 42, San Francisco 35
Los Angeles 23, Atlanta 7
Philadelphia 17, New York Giants 14
Tampa Bay 33, New Orleans 14
Washington 26, St. Louis 20

Interconference Games

Detroit 13, Baltimore 10
Oakland 35, Minnesota 13
AFC, 19 victories; NFC, 7 victories.

Newsmakers

Chicago's **Walter Payton** rushed 32 times for 163 yards and two touchdowns and needs 199 yards next week to break **O.J. Simpson's** single-season record.

Jim Plunkett threw for 263 yards and four touchdowns in San Francisco's Monday night loss to Dallas. Other big gainers: Cincinnati's **Ken Anderson,** 303 yards and one touchdown; San Diego's **Dan Fouts,** 276 yards; Miami's **Bob Griese,** 260 yards and one touchdown.

Lydell Mitchell stayed on top of the NFL receiving statistics with nine catches, one for a touchdown. Washington's **Calvin Hill** caught eight, including a touchdown.

Week 14

The Fourteenth Week, December 18, 1977

People

Raymond Chester
Balitmore
CBS-TV color commentator Merlin Olsen had just finished saying that the Colts had no deep threat when Chester grabbed a pass from Bert Jones for a 78-yard touchdown that kept alive Baltimore's game-and-division-winning rally against New England.

Tim Collier
Kansas City
The second-year cornerback from East Texas State picked off Mike Rae's pass in the second quarter and went 100 yards for a touchdown to give the Chiefs a 7–6 halftime lead over Oakland. The Raiders recovered in the second half to win 21–20.

Vince Ferragamo
Los Angeles
The rookie quarterback from Nebraska via California entered the game with Washington in the third quarter. He completed eight of 14 and threw his first two professional touchdown passes, a 17-yarder to Terry Nelson and a 2-yarder to Jim Jodat.

Morris Owens
Tampa Bay
Owens played a key role in extending the Buccaneers' winning streak from one game to two, as he caught a 61-yard touchdown pass from Gary Huff in the second quarter of Tampa Bay's 17–7 victory over St. Louis. Earlier, Owens's 62-yard catch had set up a score.

Eddie Payton
Detroit
Formerly known as "Walter's brother," Payton silenced all doubts about his individuality by returning a kickoff 98 yards and a punt 87 yards, both for touchdowns, in the Lions' loss to Minnesota. His one-game total: eight kicks, 289 yards.

Bob Thomas
Chicago
Thomas hit a 28-yard field goal in the final seconds of sudden death overtime to give the Bears a 12–9 victory over the New York Giants. The Bears are the NFC wild card entry; it's their first playoff berth since 1963, when they beat the Giants for the NFL.

Reflections

"Thank you, Lord," said George Halas. "And thank you for these fans." Then he broke into tears.

After three hours of screaming, praying, cursing, and begging, Halas, the 82-year-old owner of the Chicago Bears, could let down. From his Chicago apartment, he had just watched placekicker Bob Thomas hit a 28-yard field goal as time ran out in sudden death overtime, giving the Bears a 12–9 victory over the New York Giants and the NFC wild card playoff berth.

For the first time since 1963, when Halas coached the team to a 14–10 victory over the Giants for the NFL championship, Chicago is part of the league's postseason tournament.

Thomas's dramatic kick came after three consecutive misses, two of them earlier in the overtime period. Both of those had been complicated by low snaps.

The icy rain that fell on Giants Stadium all afternoon confounded the efforts of Walter Payton to break O.J. Simpson's single-season rushing record of 2,003 yards. The Bears' running back needed 199 yards but picked up only 47 and finished the season with 1,852 yards, third highest in NFL history behind Simpson's 1973 mark and Jim Brown's 1,863 yards in 1963.

Chicago needed the win to displace Washington, which defeated Los Angeles 17–14 the previous day. Minnesota had beaten Detroit 30–21 in another Saturday game, clinching the NFC Central Division title.

Washington's victory, which eventually proved to be an exercise in futility, was preserved in the final seconds as Los Angeles's Rafael Septien sliced and shanked two field goals in quick succession. Septien's first attempt, from 51 yards, sailed wide to the right. But the Rams got a second chance when linebacker Joe Harris was called for roughing the kicker. Septien tried from 40 yards on his second attempt.

In the AFC, Miami suffered a fate similar to Washington's. The Dolphins did their part Saturday with a methodical 31–14 drubbing of Buffalo. Bob Griese threw two touchdown passes to bring his season total to 22.

"We got it done," said Dolphins' head coach Don Shula after the game. "Now we'll have to watch tomorrow to see if New England can give it their big shot."

One Dolphin who bypassed the New England-Baltimore game was wide receiver Nat Moore. "I'm going to be on the golf course," he said. "I've had enough tension. I don't need to scream at the screen."

A fair amount of Sunday's screaming was directed at referee Fred Silva, whose call in the final minutes denied the Patriots possession and kept alive Baltimore's winning drive that ended with Don McCauley's three-yard touchdown run.

"The quarterback [Bert Jones] was in the grasp of the tackler and I blew the whistle," Silva said of the controversial call. "The ball came out. That's it."

"I thought it was a fumble," said Patriots' head coach Chuck Fairbanks. "But there were a lot of plays that could have decided this game. That one came at the wrong time."

Said Jones, "I never hear the whistle during a game so I don't know if I fumbled before the play was over. It's a judgement call and the officials gave it to us."

Baltimore's bid for the AFC East championship appeared moribund when New England's Raymond Clayborn returned the second half kickoff 101 yards for a touchdown and a 21–3 lead. But Jones engineered a march that ended with a 14-yard pass to Glenn Doughty to make it 21–10. The Patriots answered with a field goal but moments later, on third-and-18 from his own 22, Jones hit Raymond Chester with a 78-yard touchdown bomb and the Colts trailed 24–17. Baltimore's next drive set the stage for the dramatic finish, as Jones hit Freddie Scott with a 12-yard scoring pass early in the fourth quarter.

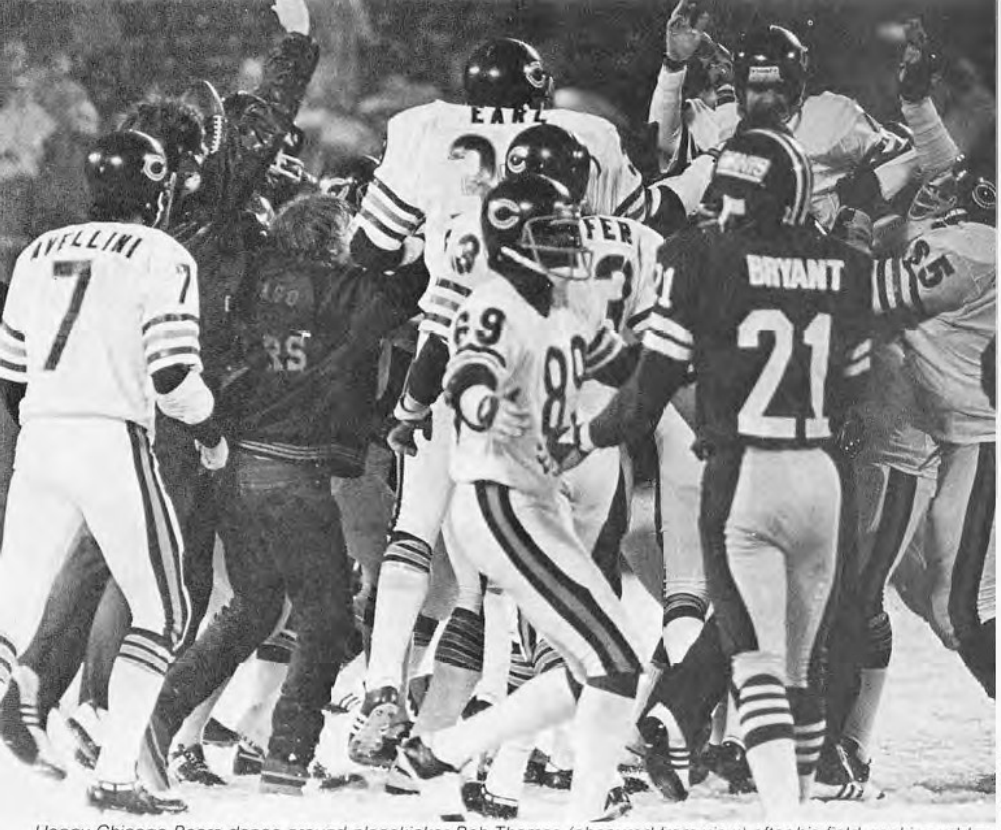
A Dynasty in the Making

Those swashbuckling Tampa Bay Buccaneers, still soaring after their history-making triumph at New Orleans last week, may never lose again. This week's victims were the St. Louis Cardinals. (Oh, the flashing of the blades, the sharp clicking of steel against steel. En garde, NFL!) The Cardinals had dropped out of playoff contention in week 13 and were missing the services of multiple-threat running back Terry Metcalf, who left early in the game.

The Bucs, on the other hand, were inspired by quarterback Gary Huff, who threw a 61-yard touhcdown pass and later set up a score with a 62-yarder, both to Morris Owens.

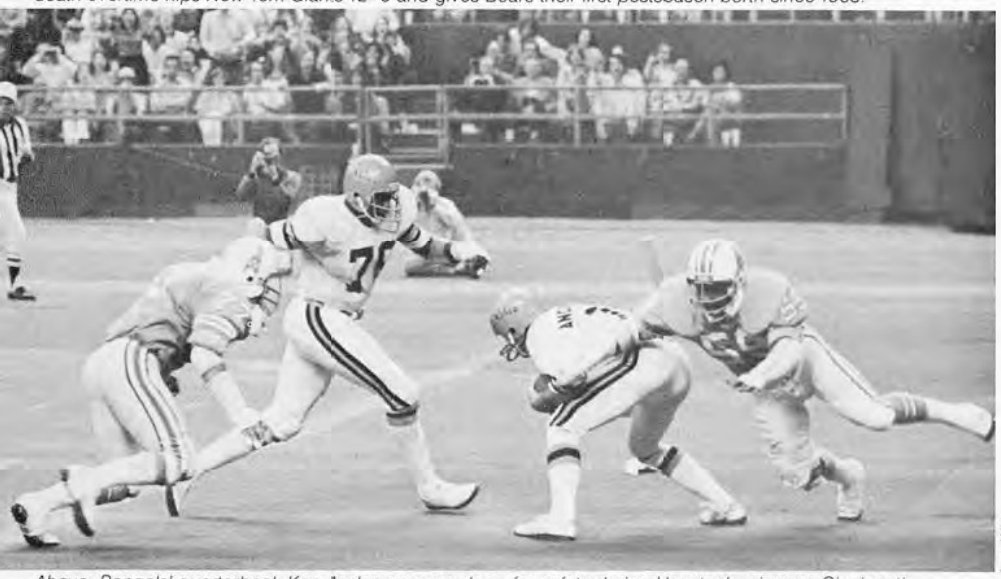
"It was sort of a Hollywood script. We win the final two games of the season and still get the number one draft pick," said Tampa Bay head coach John McKay.

Errol Flynn would have loved it.



T. K. Makita

Happy Chicago Bears dance around placekicker Bob Thomas (obscured from view) after his field goal in sudden death overtime nips New York Giants 12–9 and gives Bears their first postseason berth since 1963.



Lou Witt

Above, Bengals' quarterback Ken Anderson goes down for safety during Houston's win over Cincinnati.

Below, Steelers' Ham measures Chargers' Fouts.

David Boss

Below, Bills' Ferguson eyes receiver against Miami.

Joe Torelli

Numbers

Standings

AFC East	W	L	T	Pct.	Pts.	OP
Baltimore*	10	4	0	.714	295	221
Miami	10	4	0	.714	313	197
New England	9	5	0	.643	278	217
N.Y. Jets	3	11	0	.214	191	300
Buffalo	3	11	0	.214	160	313
AFC Central						
Pittsburgh*	9	5	0	.643	283	243
Cincinnati	8	6	0	.571	238	235
Houston	8	6	0	.571	299	230
Cleveland	6	8	0	.429	269	267
AFC West						
Denver*	12	2	0	.857	274	148
Oakland**	11	3	0	.786	351	230
San Diego	7	7	0	.500	222	205
Seattle	5	9	0	.357	282	373
Kansas City	2	12	0	.143	225	349
NFC East	**W**	**L**	**T**	**Pct.**	**Pts.**	**OP**
Dallas*	12	2	0	.857	349	212
Washington	9	5	0	.643	196	189
St. Louis	7	7	0	.500	272	287
Philadelphia	5	9	0	.357	220	207
N.Y. Giants	5	9	0	.357	181	269
NFC Central						
Minnesota*	9	5	0	.643	231	227
Chicago**	9	5	0	.643	255	253
Detroit	6	8	0	.429	183	252
Green Bay	4	10	0	.286	134	219
Tampa Bay	2	12	0	.143	103	223
NFC West						
Los Angeles*	10	4	0	.714	302	146
Atlanta	7	7	0	.500	179	129
San Francisco	5	9	0	.357	220	260
New Orleans	3	11	0	.214	232	336

*Divisional champion
**Wild card teams

Scores

American Football Conference

Baltimore 30, New England 24
Houston 21, Cincinnati 16
Miami 31, Buffalo 14
Oakland 21, Kansas City 20
Pittsburgh 10, San Diego 9
Seattle 20, Cleveland 19

National Football Conference

Atlanta 35, New Orleans 7
Chicago 12, New York Giants 9, overtime
Green Bay 16, San Francisco 14
Minnesota 30, Detroit 21
Tampa Bay 17, St. Louis 7
Washington 17, Los Angeles 14

Interconference Games

Dallas 14, Denver 6
Philadelphia 27, Los Angeles 14
AFC, 19 victories; NFC 9 victories.

Newsmakers

Walter Payton's 47-yard effort was well short of the 199 he needed to break O.J. Simpson's single-season rushing record but Payton ended the 14-game schedule with 1,852 yards, third highest in NFL history. Miami's **Gary Davis** was the week's top ground gainer with 172 yards in 27 carries, including a 60-yard touchdown.

Baltimore's **Bert Jones** threw for 340 yards and three touchdowns.

Minnesota's **Ahmad Rashad** caught eight passes for 139 yards and a touchdown to lead this week's receiving statistics.

Week 15

The Fifteenth Week, December 25, 1977
Divisional Playoffs

Oakland 37, Baltimore 31

The concept of sudden death overtime calls up images of damsels in distress, of Superman rushing to save the hostages from their ruthless captors. This week, the NFL had a rescue scene of its own, as Oakland and Baltimore acted out the third longest suspense show in league history.

It took the world champion Raiders and the AFC champion Baltimore Colts exactly 75 minutes and 43 seconds to decide 1977's first NFL playoff game. Tight end Dave Casper caught his third touchdown pass from Ken Stabler in the left rear corner of the end zone 43 seconds into the second overtime.

It was Stabler's twenty-first completion in 40 attempts. Perhaps the most important Stabler-to-Casper connection, however, was not one of the three scores but a 42-yard completion that came with just over two minutes to play in regulation time.

Trailing 31–28 and faced with second-and-10 at his 44, Stabler sent his tight end on a post pattern. Casper, on the dead run with his back to the ball, had to arch his back and make a twisting over-the-shoulder catch. Four plays later, on fourth-and-inches from the 6, Errol Mann kicked a 22-yard field goal that sent the game into sudden death overtime.

The lead changed hands nine times in all. The Colts kept pace with the Raiders mainly on the strength of big plays—Bruce Laird's 61-yard interception return and Marshall Johnson's 87-yard kickoff return, both for touchdowns—then took a 24–21 lead early in the fourth quarter after an 80-yard 13-play drive.

The teams traded touchdowns again, bringing the count to 31–28, Baltimore. A 28-yard pass interference call against Baltimore's Nelson Munsey set up a one-yard Pete Banaszak plunge. The Colts answered with a 73-yard drive that ended when Ron Lee carried 13 yards for Baltimore's last gasp.

Oakland	7	0	14	10	0	6 — 37
Baltimore	0	10	7	14	0	0 — 31

Oak—Davis 30 run (Mann kick)
Bal —Laird 61 pass interception (Linhart kick)
Bal —FG Linhart 36
Oak—Casper 8 pass from Stabler (Mann kick)
Bal —Johnson 87 kickoff return (Linhart kick)
Oak—Casper 10 pass from Stabler (Mann kick)
Bal —R. Lee 1 run (Linhart kick)
Oak—Banaszak 1 run (Mann kick)
Bal —R. Lee 13 run (Linhart kick)
Oak—FG Mann 22
Oak—Casper 10 pass from Stabler (no PAT attempted)
Attendance—60,763

Ron Ross

Casper's catch leads to overtime.

Denver 34, Pittsburgh 21

While virtually the entire city of Denver hummed "I'm Dreaming of an Orange Crushmas" and other favorites of the season, the Broncos celebrated their first trip to the playoffs with a victory over the Steelers at Mile High Stadium.

Denver quarterback Craig Morton threw a 34-yard touchdown pass to Jack Dolbin in the final two minutes to insure the win.

Refusing to yield to a painful hip injury incurred two weeks earlier, Morton came up with an 11-for-23 passing performance, good for 164 yards.

The first half, which ended in a 14–14 tie, was punctuated by Joe Greene's knockout punch to the midsection of Denver guard Paul Howard (Greene later attributed the blow to his season-long campaign against offensive holding, Howard being the latest offender). The crowd responded by chanting, "We want Greene," to express their dissatisfaction.

Denver players later credited Greene, albeit backhandedly, for supplying the spark that inspired them in the second half. Having completed only three of eight passes in the first half for a total of seven yards, Morton now threw with authority and hit tight end Riley Odoms with a 30-yard pass for the touchdown that put the Broncos ahead 21–14.

But Terry Bradshaw, who had engineered the Steelers' dominance (20½ minutes' possession to the Broncos' 9½) in the first half, came back with a 61-yard scoring drive.

The Broncos' offense responded with 66 yards in seven calls and Jim Turner gave Denver a 24–21 lead with a 44-yard field goal.

On Pittsburgh's next possession, linebacker Tom Jackson intercepted Bradshaw and set up the Broncos at the Steelers' 9-yard line. The 36-year-old Turner's second field goal, from 25 yards, made it 27–21.

With two minutes remaining, Jackson intercepted Bradshaw again and Morton put the lid on things with his strike to Dolbin.

Pittsburgh	0	14	0	7	21
Denver	7	7	7	13	34

Den—Lytle 7 run (Turner kick)
Pit —Bradshaw 1 run (Gerela kick)
Den—Armstrong 10 run (Turner kick)
Pit —Harris 1 run (Gerela kick)
Den—Odoms 30 pass from Morton (Turner kick)
Pit —Brown 1 pass from Bradshaw (Gerela kick)
Den—FG Turner 44
Den—FG Turner 25
Den—Dolbin 34 pass from Morton (Turner kick)
Attendance—75,011

Barry Staver

Dolbin's TD catch sinks Steelers.

Dallas 37, Chicago 7

Stating it as humanely as possible, it is best to begin with the fact that Chicago is not yet in Dallas's class. The youthful exuberance that enabled the Bears to ride a 9–5 record into postseason play for the first time in 14 years was less than impressive against the personnel-rich Cowboys in Texas Stadium.

And comparative statistics, the staggering pregame variety, only underscored the mismatch. For example, of the 53 sacks produced by the Dallas defense during the regular season, end Harvey Martin had a club record 23. When it was pointed out that this was only three fewer than Chicago's team total, Bears' head coach Jack Pardee said of his quarterback, Bob Avellini, "Bob's not worried about that. If he has to, he'll fight Martin himself. They're not going to scare Bob Avellini."

But Avellini's timing and composure eroded steadily in the early going and by the time the Cowboys had fashioned a 17–0 lead, his touch was all but gone.

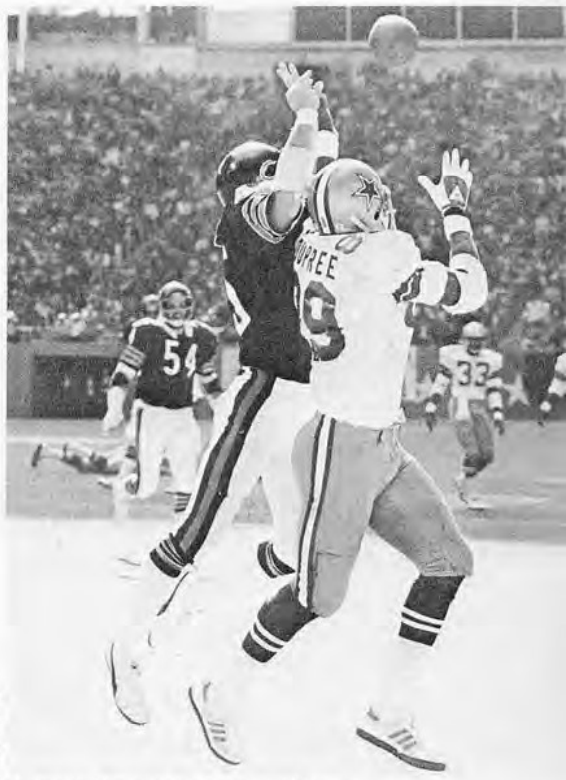
Walter Payton, the NFL's leading ground gainer with 1,852 yards in 1977, was held to 60 yards rushing on 19 carries. Early in the fourth quarter, he was knocked groggy and fumbled when he was hit by Martin and defensive tackle Randy White. In the Bears' locker room, Payton had difficulty keeping his senses and remembered almost nothing about the game.

Offensively, the Cowboys appeared to be conducting drills in preparation for the NFC championship game. Running backs Tony Dorsett and Robert Newhouse gained 85 and 80 yards respectively, each averaging five yards a carry. Quarterback Roger Staubach completed 8 of 13 passes for 134 yards, including a 28-yard touchdown to Billy Joe DuPree in the second quarter.

Dorsett's rushing output included touchdown carries of 22 and 7 yards, both in the third quarter and both made to look blackboard-basic. The outside running threat that the Cowboys so diligently sought for so long is paying greater dividends each week.

Chicago	0	0	0	7	— 7
Dallas	7	10	17	3	— 37

Dal—Dennison 2 run (Herrera kick)
Dal—DuPree 28 pass from Staubach (Herrera kick)
Dal—FG Herrera 21
Dal—Dorsett 22 run (Herrera kick)
Dal—FG Herrera 31
Dal—Dorsett 7 run (Herrera kick)
Dal—FG Herrera 27
Chi—Schubert 34 pass from Avellini (Thomas kick)



Russ Russell

DuPree's TD catch helps rout Bears.

Minnesota 14, Los Angeles 7

It came down to a problem of navigation.

Sitting at the eastern end of a tropical storm, Los Angeles was drenched with 1.5 inches of rain, a day-after-Christmas surprise for the NFC Western Division champions.

For the Vikings, it was the nicest gift imaginable. While the field was still in semiplayable condition for conventional football, Minnesota scored a first quarter touchdown and then elected to play conservatively for the remainder of the game. Against the Rams, who had trouble finding their sea legs, it worked.

Reserve quarterback Bob Lee, playing in place of injured Fran Tarkenton and ahead of late-season sensation Tommy Kramer, took the Vikings on a 70-yard drive that ended with a five-yard touchdown run by Chuck Foreman.

The rain continued to pour and the Rams continued to baffle. On first-and-goal from the Vikings' 5-yard line, quarterback Pat Haden called a pass play to tight end Charle Young. Young was well covered in the end zone but instead of throwing the ball away Haden looped one that was an easy catch for Vikings cornerback Nate Allen near the end line. Young was helpless, five yards away.

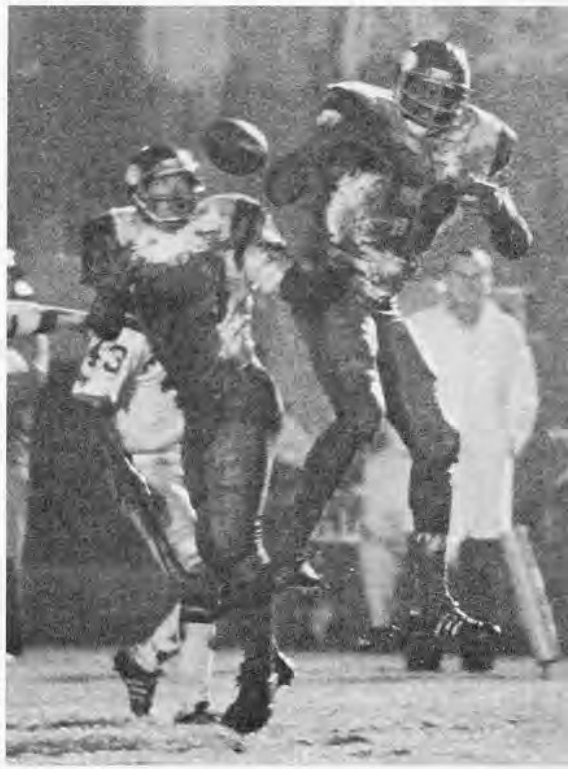
It was the first of three interceptions thrown by Haden and easily the most significant. Later, on first down from the Minnesota 20 and trailing 14–0, Haden threw for Billy Waddy but his wobbly pass was picked off almost effortlessly by safety Paul Krause.

With the quagmire at its worst, the Rams slipped and slid to their only score of the day, a one-yard touchdown pass from Haden to Harold Jackson. That left Los Angeles 56 seconds to try to tie the score. Reserve running back Jim Jodat recovered Rafael Septien's onside kick but the Rams had used all their time-outs. They reached the Vikings' 31 before Jeff Wright intercepted Haden's final pass attempt of the 1977 season.

Lee kept Minnesota in possession for 12:10 of the third quarter and totaled 20½ minutes to the Rams' 9½ in the second half. Minnesota's ball control was aided by a roughing the kicker penalty and a kickoff mishap.

Minnesota	7	7	0	0	7 — 14
Los Angeles	0	0	0	0	7 — 7

Minn—Foreman 5 run (Cox kick)
Minn—S. Johnson 1 run (Cox kick)
LA —Jackson 1 pass from Haden (Septien kick)



David Boss

Jeff Wright's interception ends mudfest.

Week 16

The Sixteenth Week, January 1, 1978
Conference Championships

Denver 20, Oakland 17

On the second weekend of 1977, the Year of the Snake (on the Chinese calendar), Ken Stabler, who is known as Snake, led the Oakland Raiders to the championship of the National Football League.

On the first weekend of 1978, the Year of the Horse, the Denver Broncos, whose mascot is the horse, unseated the Raiders as champions of the AFC.

If you think that's nothing more than a coincidental omen, consider these events in the Broncos' 20–17 victory before a howling sea of orange-clad spectators in Mile High Stadium:

—Near the midway point of the second quarter, Oakland had had the ball for 30 plays, Denver for 5. Yet Denver led 7–3. One of its plays was a 74-yard Craig Morton-to-Haven Moses bomb. The Raiders' second field goal attempt, a 29-yarder, hit the right upright of the goal post.

—Already playing without linebacker Phil Villapiano and safety George Atkinson, Oakland lost big-play wide receiver Fred Biletnikoff with a dislocated shoulder shortly before halftime.

—Denver built its lead to 14–3 in the third quarter following a recovery of an Oakland fumble on the Raiders' 17. Jon Keyworth scored the touchdown from the 1 but the key play was the one that preceded it, when Rob Lytle was hit by Oakland's Jack Tatum. The Raiders recovered a loose ball but the play had been blown dead and Denver retained possession.

—With just under eight minutes left to play, Denver linebacker Bob Swenson intercepted a pass by Stabler and returned it 15 yards to the Oakland 17. Three plays later, on third-and-five from the 12, Morton hit Moses on another touchdown pass.

Oakland had a last hurrah, Stabler passing to tight end Dave Casper for a score with 3:16 to go, but the Broncos ran out the clock.

Morton played despite a painful hip injury that kept him out of practice all week. Still, the 13-year veteran passed for 224 yards, 168 of them on five passes to Moses.

Oakland	3	0	0	14	— 17
Denver	7	0	7	6	— 20

Oak—FG Mann 20
Den—Moses 74 pass from Morton (Turner kick)
Den—Keyworth 1 run (Turner kick)
Oak—Casper 7 pass from Stabler (Mann kick)
Den—Moses 12 pass from Morton (kick failed)
Oak—Casper 17 pass from Stabler (Mann kick)
Attendance—74,982

Stayer Scott

Oakland's Dave Casper caught five passes but paid the price for his success.

Stayer Scott

Clarence Davis's fumble was recovered by Brison Manor (66) to set up Denver touchdown.

Dallas 23, Minnesota 6

No doubt about it. On a football field, at least, it's far better to receive than to give. Just ask the Minnesota Vikings, who made the Dallas Cowboys their favorite charitable cause in the NFC championship game.

Opportunism knocked three times for the Cowboys in the manner of three Viking fumbles and Dallas used the Minnesota mistakes to score three touchdowns and ease to a 23–6 victory in Texas Stadium.

On a 29-degree day that should have made the Vikings feel right at home, the team from up north also had trouble catching the ball. Or, more accurately, passing it. Throwing under fierce pressure from a Dallas rush led by Ed (Too Tall) Jones, Minnesota quarterback Bob Lee completed only 14 passes in 31 attempts.

Harvey Martin, who mans the defensive end spot opposite Jones, recovered two Minnesota fumbles. Robert Miller coughed up the first one and quarterback Roger Staubach followed with a 32-yard strike to wide receiver Golden Richards. The second Martin recovery, after a jarring hit by Jones on Chuck Foreman, preceded a 22-yard run by Danny White on a fake punt. Robert Newhouse got the touchdown that made it 13–0 on a five-yard run.

Fred Cox pulled the Vikings back into contention later in the second quarter with field goals of 32 and 37 yards, but Staubach beat the clock in the two minutes before halftime to set up Efren Herrera's 21-yard field goal that made it 16–6.

The Cowboys, who capitalized on seven Chicago turnovers in the first round of the playoffs, did it again in the fourth quarter. Linebacker Thomas Henderson, a ferocious special teams player, sledged Manfred Moore after a punt reception. Tight end Jay Saldi recovered, setting up an eventual 11-yard touchdown run by Tony Dorsett that sealed the Vikings' fate.

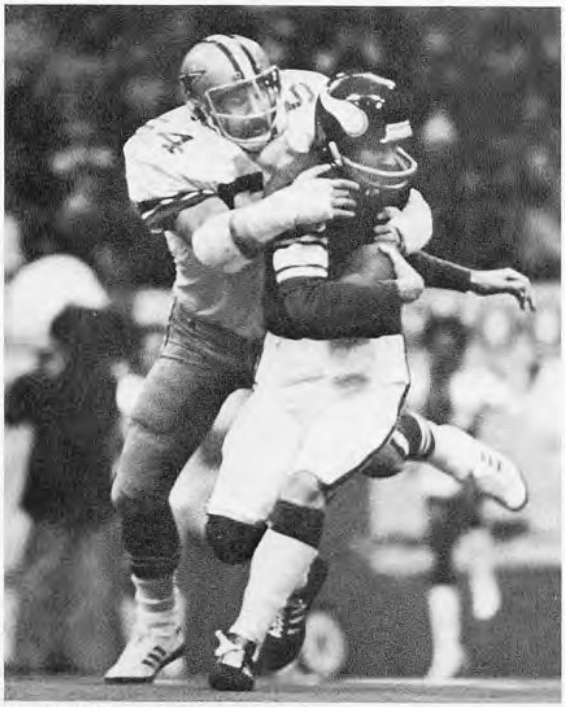
Before today's game, Minnesota had never lost an NFC championship game (in four tries) nor won a Super Bowl (also in four games). Only one of those streaks is still alive.

Minnesota	0	6	0	0	— 6
Dallas	6	10	0	7	— 23

Dal — Richards 32 pass from Staubach (kick failed)
Dal — Newhouse 5 run (Herrera kick)
Min — FG Cox 32
Min — FG Cox 37
Dal — FG Herrera 21
Dal — Dorsett 11 run (Herrera kick)
Attendance — 61,968

Russ Russell

Underslung Robert Newhouse takes the low road to a sizeable gain.



Russ Russell

Randy White smothers Bob Lee.

Russ Russell

Kyle, Johnson celebrate.

1978 Pro Bowl Rosters

The 80 Players Chosen for the Eighth Meeting
of the AFC and NFC All-Stars, Monday, January 23, 1978, in Tampa

Players are listed by position and in order of total number of votes received. Prospective starters are in bold face.

AFC

OFFENSE

WIDE RECEIVERS
Nat Moore ..... Miami
Lynn Swann ..... Pittsburgh
Ken Burrough ..... Houston
Clifford Branch ..... Oakland

TACKLES
Art Shell ..... Oakland
George Kunz ..... Baltimore
Russ Washington ..... San Diego

GUARDS
Joe DeLamielleure ..... Buffalo
Gene Upshaw ..... Oakland
Bob Kuechenberg ..... Miami

CENTERS
Jim Langer ..... Miami
Dave Dalby ..... Oakland

TIGHT ENDS
Dave Casper ..... Oakland
Russ Francis ..... New England

QUARTERBACKS
Bob Griese ..... Miami
Ken Stabler ..... Oakland

RUNNING BACKS
Franco Harris ..... Pittsburgh
Lydell Mitchell ..... Baltimore
Greg Pruitt ..... Cleveland
Mark van Eeghen ..... Oakland

DEFENSE

ENDS
Lyle Alzado ..... Denver
John Dutton ..... Baltimore
Coy Bacon ..... Cincinnati

TACKLES
Curley Culp ..... Houston
Mike Barnes ..... Baltimore
Louie Kelcher ..... San Diego

OUTSIDE LINEBACKERS
Jack Ham ..... Pittsburgh
Robert Brazile ..... Houston
Tom Jackson ..... Denver

MIDDLE LINEBACKERS
Randy Gradishar ..... Denver
Jack Lambert ..... Pittsburgh

CORNERBACKS
Mike Haynes ..... New England
Lemar Parrish ..... Cincinnati
Louis Wright ..... Denver

SAFETIES
Billy Thompson ..... Denver
Tommy Casanova ..... Cincinnati
Tony Greene ..... Buffalo

SPECIALISTS

PUNTER
Ray Guy ..... Oakland

KICKER
Toni Linhart ..... Baltimore

KICK RETURNER
Billy Johnson ..... Houston

David Boss

Bill Bergey

David Boss

Art Shell

NFC

OFFENSE

WIDE RECEIVERS
Sammy White ..... Minnesota
Drew Pearson ..... Dallas
Harold Jackson ..... Los Angeles
Mel Gray ..... St. Louis

TACKLES
Dan Dierdorf ..... St. Louis
Ron Yary ..... Minnesota
Doug France ..... Los Angeles

GUARDS
Conrad Dobler ..... St. Louis
Ed White ..... Minnesota
Tom Mack ..... Los Angeles

CENTERS
Tom Banks ..... St. Louis
Rich Saul ..... Los Angeles

TIGHT ENDS
Billy Joe DuPree ..... Dallas
Jean Fugett ..... Washington

QUARTERBACKS
Roger Staubach ..... Dallas
Pat Haden ..... Los Angeles

RUNNING BACKS
Walter Payton ..... Chicago
Lawrence McCutcheon ..... Los Angeles
Chuck Foreman ..... Minnesota
Terry Metcalf ..... St. Louis

DEFENSE

ENDS
Harvey Martin ..... Dallas
Jack Youngblood ..... Los Angeles
Claude Humphrey ..... Atlanta

TACKLES
Cleveland Elam ..... San Francisco
Larry Brooks ..... Los Angeles
Randy White ..... Dallas

OUTSIDE LINEBACKERS
Isiah Robertson ..... Los Angeles
Brad Van Pelt ..... New York Giants
Matt Blair ..... Minnesota

MIDDLE LINEBACKERS
Bill Bergey ..... Philadelphia
Jeff Siemon ..... Minnesota

CORNERBACKS
Monte Jackson ..... Los Angeles
Roger Wehrli ..... St. Louis
Rolland Lawrence ..... Atlanta

SAFETIES
Cliff Harris ..... Dallas
Charlie Waters ..... Dallas
Ken Houston ..... Washington

SPECIALISTS

PUNTER
John James ..... Atlanta

KICKER
Efren Herrera ..... Dallas

KICK RETURNER
Eddie Brown ..... Washington

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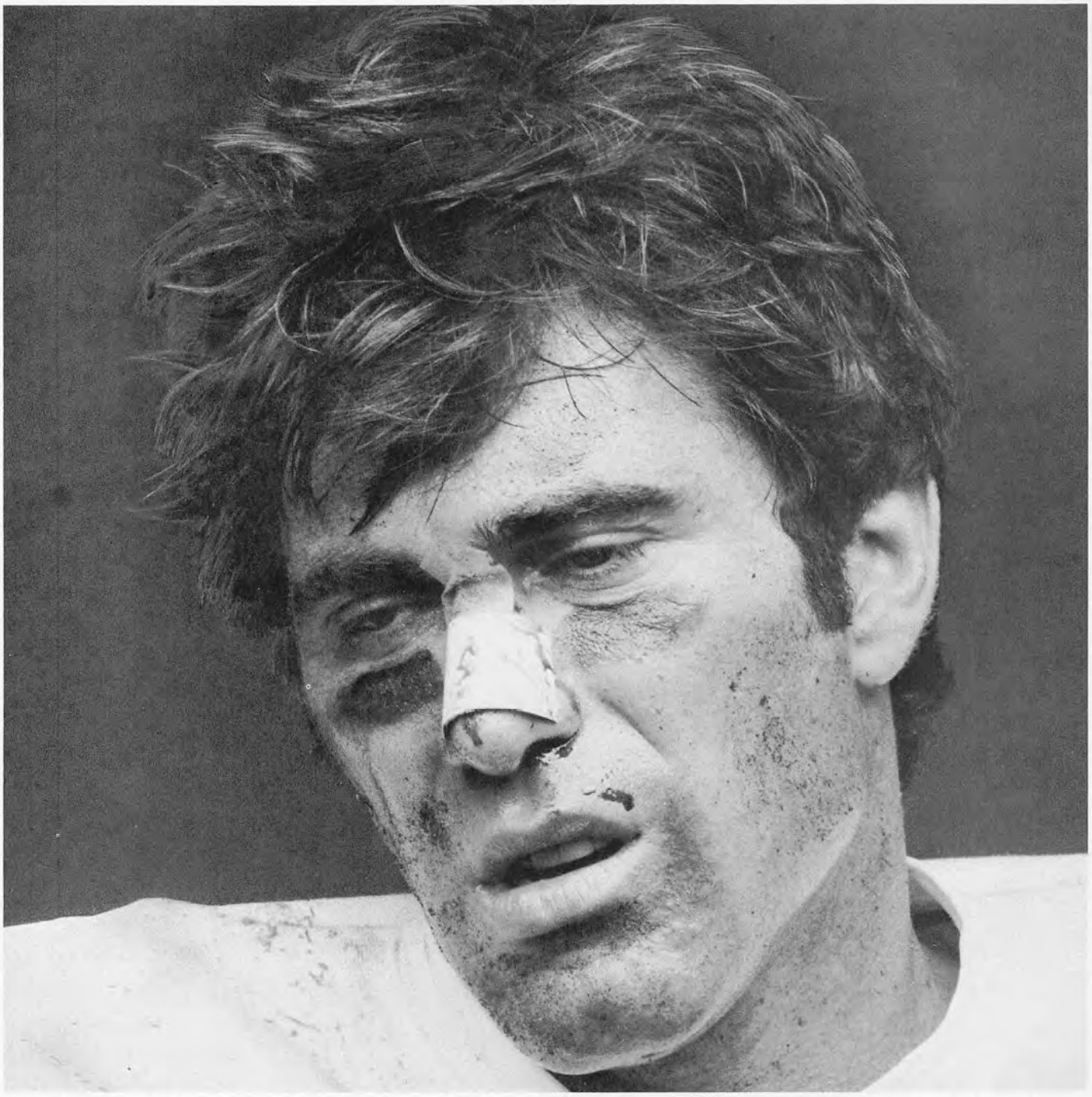

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1977 AFC Results

*Overtime

BALTIMORE COLTS

Sept. 18–at Seattle	29–14
Sept. 25–at N.Y. Jets	20–12
Oct. 2–BUFFALO	17–14
Oct. 9–MIAMI	45–28
Oct. 16–at Kansas City	17–6
Oct. 23–at New England	3–17
Oct. 30–PITTSBURGH	31–21
Nov. 7–WASHINGTON	10–3
Nov. 13–at Buffalo	31–13
Nov. 20–N.Y. JETS	33–12
Nov. 27–at Denver	13–27
Dec. 5–at Miami	6–17
Dec. 11–DETROIT	10–13
Dec. 18–NEW ENGLAND	30–24
W 10 L 4	**295–221**

BUFFALO BILLS

Sept. 18–MIAMI	0–13
Sept. 25–at Denver	6–26
Oct. 2–at Baltimore	14–17
Oct. 9–N.Y. JETS	19–24
Oct. 16–ATLANTA	3–0
Oct. 23–CLEVELAND	16–27
Oct. 30–at Seattle	17–56
Nov. 6–at New England	24–14
Nov. 13–BALTIMORE	13–31
Nov. 20–NEW ENGLAND	7–20
Nov. 28–at Oakland	13–34
Dec. 4–WASHINGTON	0–10
Dec. 11–at N.Y. Jets	14–10
Dec. 17–at Miami	14–31
W 3 L 11	**160–313**

CINCINNATI BENGALS

Sept. 18–CLEVELAND	3–13
Sept. 25–SEATTLE	42–20
Oct. 2–at San Diego	3–24
Oct. 9–vs. Green Bay (Milw.)	17–7
Oct. 17–at Pittsburgh	14–20
Oct. 23–DENVER	13–24
Oct. 30–HOUSTON*	13–10
Nov. 6–at Cleveland	10–7
Nov. 13–at Minnesota	10–42
Nov. 20–MIAMI	23–17
Nov. 27–N.Y. GIANTS	30–13
Dec. 4–at Kansas City	27–7
Dec. 10–PITTSBURGH	17–10
Dec. 18–at Houston	16–21
W 8 L 6	**238–235**

CLEVELAND BROWNS

Sept. 18–at Cincinnati	13–3
Sept. 26–NEW ENGLAND*	30–27
Oct. 2–PITTSBURGH	14–28
Oct. 9–OAKLAND	10–26
Oct. 16–at Houston	24–23
Oct. 23–at Buffalo	27–16
Oct. 30–KANSAS CITY	44–7
Nov. 6–CINCINNATI	7–10
Nov. 13–at Pittsburgh	31–35
Nov. 20–at N.Y. Giants	21–7
Nov. 27–LOS ANGELES	0–9
Dec. 4–at San Diego	14–37
Dec. 11–HOUSTON	15–19
Dec. 18–at Seattle	19–20
W 6 L 8	**269–267**

DENVER BRONCOS

Sept. 18–ST. LOUIS	7–0
Sept. 25–BUFFALO	26–6
Oct. 2–at Seattle	24–13
Oct. 9–KANSAS CITY	23–7
Oct. 16–at Oakland	30–7
Oct. 23–at Cincinnati	24–13
Oct. 30–OAKLAND	14–24
Nov. 6–PITTSBURGH	21–7
Nov. 13–at San Diego	17–14
Nov. 20–at Kansas City	14–7
Nov. 27–BALTIMORE	27–13
Dec. 4–at Houston	24–14
Dec. 11–SAN DIEGO	17–9
Dec. 18–at Dallas	6–14
W 12 L 2	**274–148**

HOUSTON OILERS

Sept. 18–N.Y. JETS	20–0
Sept. 25–at Green Bay	16–10
Oct. 2–at Miami	7–27
Oct. 9–PITTSBURGH	27–10
Oct. 16–CLEVELAND	23–24
Oct. 23–at Pittsburgh	10–27
Oct. 30–at Cincinnati*	10–13
Nov. 6–CHICAGO	47–0
Nov. 13–at Oakland	29–34
Nov. 20–at Seattle	22–10
Nov. 27–KANSAS CITY	34–20
Dec. 4–DENVER	14–24
Dec. 11–at Cleveland	19–15
Dec. 18–CINCINNATI	21–16
W 8 L 6	**299–230**

KANSAS CITY CHIEFS

Sept. 18–at New England	17–21
Sept. 25–SAN DIEGO	7–23
Oct. 3–OAKLAND	28–37
Oct. 9–at Denver	7–23
Oct. 16–BALTIMORE	6–17
Oct. 23–at San Diego	21–16
Oct. 30–at Cleveland	7–44
Nov. 6–GREEN BAY	20–10
Nov. 13–at Chicago	27–28
Nov. 20–DENVER	7–14
Nov. 27–at Houston	20–34
Dec. 4–CINCINNATI	7–27
Dec. 11–SEATTLE	31–34
Dec. 18–at Oakland	20–21
W 2 L 12	**225–349**

MIAMI DOLPHINS

Sept. 18–at Buffalo	13–0
Sept. 25–at San Francisco	19–15
Oct. 2–HOUSTON	27–7
Oct. 9–at Baltimore	28–45
Oct. 16–N.Y. JETS	21–17
Oct. 23–SEATTLE	31–13
Oct. 30–SAN DIEGO	13–14
Nov. 6–at New York Jets	14–10
Nov. 13–NEW ENGLAND	17–5
Nov. 20–at Cincinnati	17–23
Nov. 24–at St. Louis	55–14
Dec. 5–BALTIMORE	17–6
Dec. 11–at New England	10–14
Dec. 17–BUFFALO	31–14
W 10 L 4	**313–197**

NEW ENGLAND PATRIOTS

Sept. 18–KANSAS CITY	21–17
Sept. 26–at Cleveland*	27–30
Oct. 2–at N.Y. Jets	27–30
Oct. 9–SEATTLE	31–0
Oct. 16–San Diego	24–20
Oct. 23–BALTIMORE	17–3
Oct. 30–N.Y. JETS	24–13
Nov. 6–BUFFALO	14–24
Nov. 13–at Miami	5–17
Nov. 20–at Buffalo	20–7
Nov. 27–PHILADELPHIA	14–6
Dec. 4–at Atlanta	16–10
Dec. 11–MIAMI	14–10
Dec. 18–at Baltimore	24–30
W 9 L 5	**278–217**

NEW YORK JETS

Sept. 18–at Houston	0–20
Sept. 25–BALTIMORE	12–20
Oct. 2–NEW ENGLAND	30–27
Oct. 9–at Buffalo	24–19
Oct. 16–at Miami	17–21
Oct. 23–OAKLAND	27–28
Oct. 30–at New England	13–24
Nov. 6–MIAMI	10–14
Nov. 13–SEATTLE	0–17
Nov. 20–at Baltimore	12–33
Nov. 27–PITTSBURGH	20–23
Dec. 4–at New Orleans	16–13
Dec. 11–BUFFALO	10–14
Dec. 18–at Philadelphia	0–27
W 3 L 11	**191–300**

OAKLAND RAIDERS

Sept. 18–SAN DIEGO	24–0
Sept. 25–at Pittsburgh	16–7
Oct. 3–at Kansas City	37–28
Oct. 9–at Cleveland	26–10
Oct. 16–DENVER	7–30
Oct. 23–at N.Y. Jets	28–27
Oct. 30–at Denver	24–14
Nov. 6–SEATTLE	44–7
Nov. 13–HOUSTON	34–29
Nov. 20–at San Diego	7–12
Nov. 28–BUFFALO	34–13
Dec. 4–at Los Angeles	14–20
Dec. 11–MINNESOTA	35–13
Dec. 18–KANSAS CITY	21–20
W 11 L 3	**351–230**

PITTSBURGH STEELERS

Sept. 19–SAN FRANCISCO	27–0
Sept. 25–OAKLAND	7–16
Oct. 2–at Cleveland	28–14
Oct. 9–at Houston	10–27
Oct. 17–CINCINNATI	20–14
Oct. 23–HOUSTON	27–10
Oct. 30–at Baltimore	21–31
Nov. 6–at Denver	7–21
Nov. 13–CLEVELAND	35–31
Nov. 20–DALLAS	28–13
Nov. 27–at N.Y. Jets	23–20
Dec. 4–SEATTLE	30–20
Dec. 10–at Cincinnati	10–17
Dec. 18–at San Diego	10–9
W 9 L 5	**283–243**

SAN DIEGO CHARGERS

Sept. 18–at Oakland	0–24
Sept. 25–at Kansas City	23–7
Oct. 2–CINCINNATI	24–3
Oct. 9–at New Orleans	14–0
Oct. 16–NEW ENGLAND	20–24
Oct. 23–KANSAS CITY	16–21
Oct. 30–at Miami	14–13
Nov. 6–at Detroit	0–20
Nov. 13–DENVER	14–17
Nov. 20–OAKLAND	12–7
Nov. 27–at Seattle	30–28
Dec. 4–CLEVELAND	37–14
Dec. 11–at Denver	9–17
Dec. 18–PITTSBURGH	9–10
W 7 L 7	**222–205**

TAMPA BAY BUCCANEERS

Sept. 18–BALTIMORE	14–29
Sept. 25–at Cincinnati	20–42
Oct. 2–DENVER	13–24
Oct. 9–at New England	0–31
Oct. 16–TAMPA BAY	30–23
Oct. 23–at Miami	13–31
Oct. 30–BUFFALO	56–17
Nov. 6–at Oakland	7–44
Nov. 13–at N.Y. Jets	17–0
Nov. 20–HOUSTON	10–22
Nov. 27–SAN DIEGO	28–30
Dec. 4–at Pittsburgh	20–30
Dec. 11–at Kansas City	34–31
Dec. 18–CLEVELAND	20–19
W 5 L 9	**282–373**

AMERICAN FOOTBALL CONFERENCE STANDINGS

Eastern Division

	W	L	T	Pct.	Pts.	OP
Baltimore	10	4	0	.714	295	221
Miami	10	4	0	.714	313	197
New England	9	5	0	.643	278	217
N.Y. Jets	3	11	0	.214	191	300
Buffalo	3	11	0	.214	160	313

Central Division

	W	L	T	Pct.	Pts.	OP
Pittsburgh	9	5	0	.643	283	243
Houston	8	6	0	.571	299	230
Cincinnati	8	6	0	.571	238	235
Cleveland	6	8	0	.429	269	267

Western Division

	W	L	T	Pct.	Pts.	OP
Denver	12	2	0	.857	274	148
Oakland	11	3	0	.786	351	230
San Diego	7	7	0	.500	222	205
Seattle	5	9	0	.357	282	373
Kansas City	2	12	0	.143	225	349

AFC Playoffs

Oakland 37, Baltimore 31 (2 OT)
Denver 34, Pittsburgh 21

AFC Championship

Denver 20, Oakland 17

1977 NFC Results

*Overtime

ATLANTA FALCONS

Sept. 18–LOS ANGELES	17–6
Sept. 25–at Washington	6–10
Oct. 2–N.Y. GIANTS	17–3
Oct. 9–at San Francisco	7–0
Oct. 16–at Buffalo	0–3
Oct. 23–at Chicago	16–10
Oct. 30–MINNESOTA	7–14
Nov. 6–SAN FRANCISCO	3–10
Nov. 13–DETROIT	17–6
Nov. 20–at New Orleans	20–21
Nov. 27–at Tampa Bay	17–0
Dec. 4–NEW ENGLAND	10–16
Dec. 11–at Los Angeles	7–23
Dec. 18–NEW ORLEANS	35–7
W 7 L 7	**179–129**

CHICAGO BEARS

Sept. 18–DETROIT	30–20
Sept. 25–at St. Louis	13–16
Oct. 2–NEW ORLEANS	24–42
Oct. 10–LOS ANGELES	24–23
Oct. 16–at Minnesota*	16–22
Oct. 23–ATLANTA	10–16
Oct. 30–at Green Bay	26–0
Nov. 6–at Houston	0–47
Nov. 13–KANSAS CITY	28–27
Nov. 20–MINNESOTA	10–7
Nov. 24–at Detroit	31–14
Dec. 4–at Tampa Bay	10–0
Dec. 11–GREEN BAY	21–10
Dec. 18–at N.Y. Giants*	12–9
W 9 L 5	**255–253**

DALLAS COWBOYS

Sept. 18–at Minnesota*	16–10
Sept. 25–N.Y. GIANTS	41–21
Oct. 2–TAMPA BAY	23–7
Oct. 9–at St. Louis	30–24
Oct. 16–WASHINGTON	34–16
Oct. 23–at Philadelphia	16–10
Oct. 30–DETROIT	37–0
Nov. 6–at N.Y. Giants	24–10
Nov. 14–ST. LOUIS	17–24
Nov. 20–at Pittsburgh	13–28
Nov. 27–at Washington	14–7
Dec. 4–PHILADELPHIA	24–14
Dec. 12–at San Francisco	42–35
Dec. 18–DENVER	14–6
W 12 L 2	**345–212**

DETROIT LIONS

Sept. 18–at Chicago	20–30
Sept. 25–NEW ORLEANS	23–19
Oct. 2–PHILADELPHIA	17–13
Oct. 9–at Minnesota	7–14
Oct. 16–GREEN BAY	10–6
Oct. 23–at San Francisco	7–28
Oct. 30–at Dallas	0–37
Nov. 6–SAN DIEGO	20–0
Nov. 13–at Atlanta	6–17
Nov. 20–TAMPA BAY	16–7
Nov. 24–CHICAGO	14–31
Dec. 4–at Green Bay	9–10
Dec. 11–at Baltimore	13–10
Dec. 17–MINNESOTA	21–30
W 6 L 8	**183–252**

GREEN BAY PACKERS

Sept. 18–at New Orleans	24–20
Sept. 25–HOUSTON	10–16
Oct. 2–at Minnesota	7–19
Oct. 9–CINCINNATI	7–17
Oct. 16–at Detroit	6–10
Oct. 23–at Tampa Bay	13–0
Oct. 30–CHICAGO	0–26
Nov. 6–at Kansas City	10–20
Nov. 13–LOS ANGELES	6–24
Nov. 21–at Washington	9–10
Nov. 27–MINNESOTA	6–13
Dec. 4–DETROIT	10–9
Dec. 11–at Chicago	10–21
Dec. 18–SAN FRANCISCO	16–14
W 4 L 10	**134–219**

LOS ANGELES RAMS

Sept. 18–at Atlanta	6–17
Sept. 25–PHILADELPHIA	20–0
Oct. 2–SAN FRANCISCO	34–14
Oct. 10–at Chicago	23–24
Oct. 16–NEW ORLEANS	14–7
Oct. 24–MINNESOTA	35–3
Oct. 30–at New Orleans	26–27
Nov. 6–TAMPA BAY	31–0
Nov. 13–vs. Green Bay (Milw.)	24–6
Nov. 20–at San Francisco	23–10
Nov. 27–at Cleveland	9–0
Dec. 4–OAKLAND	20–14
Dec. 11–ATLANTA	23–7
Dec. 17–at Washington	14–17
W 10 L 4	**302–146**

MINNESOTA VIKINGS

Sept. 18–DALLAS*	10–16
Sept. 24–at Tampa Bay	9–3
Oct. 2–GREEN BAY	19–7
Oct. 9–DETROIT	14–7
Oct. 16–CHICAGO*	22–16
Oct. 24–at Los Angeles	3–35
Oct. 30–at Atlanta	14–7
Nov. 6–ST. LOUIS	7–27
Nov. 13–CINCINNATI	42–10
Nov. 20–at Chicago	7–10
Nov. 27–at Green Bay	13–6
Dec. 4–SAN FRANCISCO	28–27
Dec. 11–at Oakland	13–35
Dec. 18–at Detroit	30–21
W 9 L 5	**231–227**

NEW ORLEANS SAINTS

Sept. 18–GREEN BAY	20–24
Sept. 25–at Detroit	19–23
Oct. 2–at Chicago	42–24
Oct. 9–SAN DIEGO	0–14
Oct. 16–at Los Angeles	7–14
Oct. 23–at St. Louis	31–49
Oct. 30–LOS ANGELES	27–26
Nov. 6–at Philadelphia	7–28
Nov. 13–SAN FRANCISCO*	7–10
Nov. 20–ATLANTA	21–20
Nov. 27–at San Francisco	17–20
Dec. 4–N.Y. JETS	13–16
Dec. 11–TAMPA BAY	14–33
Dec. 18–at Atlanta	7–35
W 3 L11	**232–336**

NEW YORK GIANTS

Sept. 18–WASHINGTON	20–17
Sept. 25–at Dallas	21–41
Oct. 2–at Atlanta	3–17
Oct. 9–PHILADELPHIA	10–28
Oct. 16–SAN FRANCISCO	20–17
Oct. 23–at Washington	17–6
Oct. 31–at St. Louis	0–28
Nov. 6–DALLAS	10–24
Nov. 13–at Tampa Bay	10–0
Nov. 20–CLEVELAND	7–21
Nov. 27–at Cincinnati	13–30
Dec. 4–ST. LOUIS	27–7
Dec. 11–at Philadelphia	14–17
Dec. 18–CHICAGO*	9–12
W 5 L 9	**181–265**

PHILADELPHIA EAGLES

Sept. 18–TAMPA BAY	13–3
Sept. 25–at Los Angeles	0–20
Oct. 2–at Detroit	13–17
Oct. 9–at N.Y. Giants	28–10
Oct. 16–ST. LOUIS	17–21
Oct. 23–DALLAS	10–16
Oct. 30–at Washington	17–23
Nov. 6–NEW ORLEANS	28–7
Nov. 13–WASHINGTON	14–17
Nov. 20–at St. Louis	16–21
Nov. 27–at New England	6–14
Dec. 4–at Dallas	14–24
Dec. 11–N.Y. GIANTS	17–14
Dec. 18–N.Y. JETS	27–0
W 5 L 9	**220–207**

ST. LOUIS CARDINALS

Sept. 18–at Denver	0–7
Sept. 25–CHICAGO	16–13
Oct. 2–at Washington	14–24
Oct. 9–DALLAS	24–30
Oct. 16–at Philadelphia	21–17
Oct. 23–NEW ORLEANS	49–31
Oct. 31–N.Y. GIANTS	28–0
Nov. 6–at Minnesota	27–7
Nov. 14–at Dallas	24–17
Nov. 20–PHILADELPHIA	21–16
Nov. 24–MIAMI	14–55
Dec. 4–at N.Y. Giants	7–27
Dec. 10–WASHINGTON	20–26
Dec. 18–at Tampa Bay	7–17
W 7 L 7	**272–287**

SAN FRANCISCO 49ERS

Sept. 19–at Pittsburgh	0–27
Sept. 25–MIAMI	15–19
Oct. 2–at Los Angeles	14–34
Oct. 9–ATLANTA	0–7
Oct. 16–at N.Y. Giants	17–20
Oct. 23–DETROIT	28–7
Oct. 30–TAMPA BAY	20–10
Nov. 6–at Atlanta	10–3
Nov. 13–at New Orleans*	10–7
Nov. 20–LOS ANGELES	10–23
Nov. 27–NEW ORLEANS	20–17
Dec. 4–at Minnesota	27–28
Dec. 12–DALLAS	35–42
Dec. 18–vs. Green Bay	14–16
W 5 L 9	**220–260**

SEATTLE SEAHAWKS

Sept. 18–at Philadelphia	3–13
Sept. 24–MINNESOTA	3–9
Oct. 2–at Dallas	7–23
Oct. 9–WASHINGTON	0–10
Oct. 16–at Seattle	23–30
Oct. 23–GREEN BAY	0–13
Oct. 30–at San Francisco	10–20
Nov. 6–at Los Angeles	0–31
Nov. 13–N.Y. GIANTS	0–10
Nov. 20–at Detroit	7–16
Nov. 27–ATLANTA	0–17
Dec. 4–CHICAGO	0–10
Dec. 11–at New Orleans	33–14
Dec. 18–ST. LOUIS	17–7
W 2 L 12	**103–223**

WASHINGTON REDSKINS

Sept. 18–at N.Y. Giants	17–20
Sept. 25–ATLANTA	10–6
Oct. 2–ST. LOUIS	24–14
Oct. 9–at Tampa Bay	10–0
Oct. 16–at Dallas	16–34
Oct. 23–N.Y. GIANTS	6–17
Oct. 30–PHILADELPHIA	23–17
Nov. 7–at Baltimore	3–10
Nov. 13–at Philadelphia	17–14
Nov. 21–GREEN BAY	10–9
Nov. 27–DALLAS	7–14
Dec. 4–at Buffalo	10–0
Dec. 10–at St. Louis	26–20
Dec. 17–LOS ANGELES	17–14
W 9 L 5	**196–189**

NATIONAL FOOTBALL CONFERENCE STANDINGS

Eastern Division

	W	L	T	Pct.	Pts.	OP
Dallas	12	2	0	.857	345	212
Washington	9	5	0	.643	196	189
St. Louis	7	7	0	.500	272	287
Philadelphia	5	9	0	.357	220	207
N.Y. Giants	5	9	0	.357	181	265

Western Division

	W	L	T	Pct.	Pts.	OP
Los Angeles	10	4	0	.714	302	146
Atlanta	7	7	0	.500	179	129
San Francisco	5	9	0	.357	220	260
New Orleans	3	11	0	.214	232	336

Central Division

	W	L	T	Pct.	Pts.	OP
Minnesota	9	5	0	.643	231	227
Chicago	9	5	0	.643	255	253
Detroit	6	8	0	.429	183	252
Green Bay	4	10	0	.286	134	219
Tampa Bay	2	12	0	.143	103	223

NFC Playoffs

Dallas 37, Chicago 7
Minnesota 14, Los Angeles 7

NFC Championship

Dallas 23, Minnesota 6

Record-Setters of 1977

For the Chicago Bears' Walter Payton, 1977 was a masterpiece year.

The third-year pro from Jackson State used the football field as his canvas and proceeded to paint a remarkable season, one that put him at the head of the class of NFL running backs.

Payton rushed for 1,852 yards, the third highest total in NFL history. Incredibly, his yardage exceeded the rushing output of ten teams—Cincinnati, Kansas City, Minnesota, San Diego, Washington, Philadelphia, Detroit, New York Jets, Green Bay, and Tampa Bay.

He surpassed the 100-yard mark 10 times, one short of the NFL high, and set three individual records. The most spectacular came November 20, when he went over, around, and through the Vikings for 275 yards, eclipsing O.J. Simpson's year-old record of 273.

Payton, 23, was 6 years old when Minnesota's Jim Marshall began a streak that is still active 18 years later. The Vikings' defensive end has played in 250 consecutive games dating back to the 1960 season when he was a rookie with Cleveland. He was traded to Minnesota in 1961 and has played in every regular season game in the franchise's history (236).

O.J. Simpson opened the 1977 season 2,867 yards shy of breaking Jim Brown's career rushing mark of 12,312. He was bothered by a series of nagging injuries and seven games into the schedule hurt his knee. Surgery was needed to repair the damage.

Don Lansu

Payton ran for more yardage than 10 teams.

Fred Anderson

Marshall hasn't missed a game in 18 years.

Simpson had gained 557 yards to that point, giving him a career total of 10,183.

Little men were prominent in 1977. Eddie Payton, Walter's 5-foot 8-inch brother, returned a punt and kickoff for touchdowns in the Lions' game against Minnesota in mid December; Billy (White Shoes) Johnson, a 5–9 package of excitement at Houston, set a career mark for average gain on punt returns (13.7); St. Louis's versatile 5–10 Terry Metcalf became the first player to gain 2,000 or more combined yards in three different seasons; and the Redskins' resident returner, 5–11 Eddie Brown, set two punt return records and tied another.

Endurance was the password for John James's entry into the record book. He tied an 11-year-old record by punting 105 times for the Falcons. He had 101 punts in 1976. Quality goes with James's quantity. He was the NFC's top punter in 1976 and second best in 1977.

Kansas City set a pair of records for most yards allowed rushing (2,971) and first downs allowed rushing (169).

Tampa Bay ended its 26-game losing streak by returning three interceptions for touchdowns against the Saints, tying a feat that was last accomplished in 1972.

The Steelers equaled two marks for penalties and established a standard for courage. They didn't fair catch a single punt in 14 games.

Individual Records Set in 1977

Most consecutive games, career—250, Jim Marshall, Minnesota
Most games, one club, career—238, Jim Marshall, Minnesota
Most consecutive games, one club, career—238, Jim Marshall, Minnesota
Highest field goal percentage, career (minimum: 100 field goals)—66.9, Don Cockroft, Cleveland
Most rushing attempts, season—339, Walter Payton, Chicago
Most yards gained, rushing, game—275, Walter Payton, Chicago vs. Minnesota, November 20
Most passes, career—5,895, Fran Tarkenton, Minnesota
Most passes completed, career—3,341, Fran Tarkenton, Minnesota
Highest completion percentage, career (minimum: 1,500 passes)—59.9, Ken Stabler, Oakland
Most yards passing, career—43,535, Fran Tarkenton, Minnesota
Most seasons, 1,000-or-more yards passing—17, Fran Tarkenton, Minnesota
Most consecutive seaons, 1,000-or-more yards passing—17, Fran Tarkenton, Minnesota
Most touchdown passes, career—317, Fran Tarkenton, Minnesota
Lowest percentage, passes had intercepted, career (minimum: 1,500 passes)—3.2, Ken Anderson, Cincinnati
Most pass receptions, career—649, Charley Taylor, Washington
Most punts,career—1,018, Jerrel Wilson, Kansas City
Most yards punting, career—44,218, Jerrel Wilson, Kansas City
Most punt returns, season—57, Eddie Brown, Washington
Most punt returns, game—11, Eddie Brown, Washington vs. Tampa Bay, October 9
Highest average gain, punt returns, career (minimum: 75 punt returns)—13.7, Billy Johnson, Houston
Most combined attempts, season—373, Lydell Mitchell, Baltimore
Walter Payton, Chicago
Most seasons, 2,000-or-more combined yards gained—3, Terry Metcalf, St. Louis

Team Records Set in 1977

Most seasons leading league, rushing—12, Chicago
Most rushing attempts, season—681, Oakland
Most penalties, season—125, Cleveland
Most first downs allowed, rushing, season—169, Kansas City
Most yards allowed, rushing, season—2,971, Kansas City
Lowest average gain allowed, kickoff returns, season—15.8, Oakland

Individual Records Tied in 1977

Longest return, intercepted pass—102 yards, Gary Barbaro, Kansas City vs. Seattle, December 11
Most punts, season—105, John James, Atlanta
Most combined kick returns, game—12, Eddie Brown, Washington vs. Tampa Bay, October 9
Most touchdowns, combined kick returns, game—2, Eddie Payton, Detroit vs. Minnesota, December 17
Most fumbles recovered, game—4, Joe Ferguson, Buffalo vs. Miami, September 18
Most own fumbles recovered, game—4, Joe Ferguson, Buffalo vs. Miami, September 18

Club Records Tied in 1977

Most first downs by penalty, game—9, Baltimore vs. Pittsburgh, October 30
Fewest fair catches, season—0, Pittsburgh
Most first downs allowed by penalty, season—36, Pittsburgh
Most touchdowns, interception returns, game—3, Tampa Bay vs. New Orleans, December 11
Most opponents' punt returns, season—71, Tampa Bay

Rushing

LEADING RUSHERS	Att.	Yards	Avg.	Long	TDs
AFC					
Mark van Eeghen, Oakland	324	1273	3.9	27	7
Franco Harris, Pittsburgh	300	1162	3.9	61	11
Lydell Mitchell, Baltimore	301	1159	3.9	64	3
Greg Pruitt, Cleveland	236	1086	4.6	78	3
Sam Cunningham, New England	270	1015	3.8	31	4
Clarence Davis, Oakland	194	787	4.1	37	5
Sherman Smith, Seattle	163	763	4.7	39	4
Cleo Miller, Cleveland	163	756	4.6	38	4
Don Calhoun, New England	198	727	3.7	25	4
Ronnie Coleman, Houston	185	660	3.6	22	5
Rob Carpenter, Houston	144	652	4.5	77	1
Benny Malone, Miami	129	615	4.8	66	5
Clark Gaines, N.Y. Jets	158	595	3.8	19	3
Pete Johnson, Cincinnati	152	583	3.8	65	4
O.J. Simpson, Buffalo	126	557	4.4	39	0
Ed Podolak, Kansas City	133	550	4.1	41	5
Archie Griffin, Cincinnati	137	549	4.0	31	0
NFC					
Walter Payton, Chicago	339	1852	5.5	73	14
Lawrence McCutcheon, Los Angeles	294	1238	4.2	48	7
Chuck Foreman, Minnesota	270	1112	4.1	51	6
Tony Dorsett, Dallas	208	1007	4.8	84	12
Delvin Williams, San Francisco	269	934	3.5	40	7
Haskel Stanback, Atlanta	247	873	3.5	35	6
Chuck Muncie, New Orleans	201	811	4.0	36	6
Mike Thomas, Washington	228	806	3.5	31	3
Wilbur Jackson, San Francisco	179	780	4.4	80	7
Terry Metcalf, St. Louis	149	739	5.0	62	4
Robert Newhouse, Dallas	180	721	4.0	29	3
Wayne Morris, St. Louis	165	661	4.0	35	8
Tony Galbreath, New Orleans	168	644	3.8	26	3
John Cappelletti, Los Angeles	178	598	3.4	15	5
Bob Hammond, N.Y. Giants	154	577	3.7	30	3
Barty Smith, Green Bay	166	554	3.3	11	2
Mike Hogan, Philadelphia	155	546	3.5	19	0

LONGEST RUNS

AFC—78 yards, touchdown, Greg Pruitt, Cleveland vs. Kansas City, October 30

NFC—84 yards, touchdown, Tony Dorsett, Dallas vs. Philadelphia, December 4

BEST PERFORMANCES

AFC—179 yards, 29 attempts, two touchdowns, Franco Harris, Pittsburgh vs. Dallas, November 20

NFC—275 yards, 40 attempts, one touchdown, Walter Payton, Chicago vs. Minnesota, November 20

Russ Russell

Dallas rookie Tony Dorsett had the NFL's longest run.

Tak Makita

Oakland workhorse Mark van Eeghen, the AFC's leading rusher.

George Gojkovich

Franco Harris, a fifth 1,000-yard season in his six-year career.

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Passing

LEADING PASSERS	Att.	Comp.	Pct. Comp.	Yds. Gnd.	Avg Yds Gained	TD Pass	Pct. TD	LP	Int.	Pct. Int.	Rating
AFC											
Bob Griese, Miami	307	180	58.6	2252	7.34	22	7.2	73	13	4.2	88.0
Craig Morton, Denver	254	131	51.6	1929	7.59	14	5.5	81	8	3.1	82.1
Bert Jones, Baltimore	393	224	57.0	2686	6.83	17	4.3	78	11	2.8	80.7
Ken Stabler, Oakland	294	169	57.5	2176	7.40	20	6.8	44	20	6.8	75.2
Terry Bradshaw, Pittsburgh	314	162	51.6	2523	8.04	17	5.4	65	19	6.1	71.2
Ken Anderson, Cincinnati	323	166	51.4	2145	6.64	11	3.4	94	11	3.4	69.8
Steve Grogan, New England	305	160	52.5	2162	7.09	17	5.6	68	21	6.9	65.3
Dan Pastorini, Houston	319	169	53.0	1987	6.23	13	4.1	85	18	5.6	62.6
Brian Sipe, Cleveland	195	112	57.4	1233	6.32	9	4.6	52	14	7.2	61.6
Richard Todd, N.Y. Jets	265	133	50.2	1863	7.03	11	4.2	87	17	6.4	60.6
NFC											
Roger Staubach, Dallas	361	210	58.2	2620	7.26	18	5.0	67	9	2.5	87.1
Pat Haden, Los Angeles	216	122	56.5	1551	7.18	11	5.1	58	6	2.8	84.4
Fran Tarkenton, Minnesota	258	155	60.1	1734	6.72	9	3.5	59	14	5.4	69.3
Greg Landry, Detroit	240	135	56.3	1359	5.66	6	2.5	39	7	2.9	68.8
Archie Manning, New Orleans	205	113	55.1	1284	6.26	8	3.9	59	9	4.4	68.8
Billy Kilmer, Washington	201	99	49.3	1187	5.91	8	4.0	59	7	3.5	66.6
Jim Hart, St. Louis	354	185	52.3	2534	7.16	13	3.7	69	20	5.6	64.5
Jim Plunkett, San Francisco	248	128	51.6	1693	6.83	9	3.6	47	14	5.6	62.2
Bob Avellini, Chicago	293	154	52.6	2004	6.84	11	3.8	75	18	6.1	61.7
Ron Jaworski, Philadelphia	346	166	48.0	2183	6.31	18	5.2	55	21	6.1	60.3

LONGEST PASS PLAYS

AFC—94 yards, touchdown, Ken Anderson to Billy Brooks, Cincinnati vs. Minnesota, November 13

NFC—95 yards, touchdown, Lynn Dickey to Steve Odom, Green Bay vs. Minnesota, October 2

The passing ratings are based on performance standards established for completion percentage, interception percentage, touchdown percentage, and average gain. Passers are allocated points according to how their marks compare with those standards, and the points are then converted to a scale of 100.0.

Tak Makita

Bob Griese, 22 touchdowns and the NFL's top rating.

LEADING RECEIVERS	No.	Yards	Avg.	Long	TDs
AFC					
Lydell Mitchell, Baltimore (rb)	71	620	8.7	38	4
Bob Chandler, Buffalo	60	745	12.4	31	4
Clark Gaines, N.Y. Jets (rb)	55	469	8.5	31	1
Nat Moore, Miami	52	765	14.7	73	12
Don McCauley, Baltimore (rb)	51	495	9.7	34	2
Lynn Swann, Pittsburgh	50	789	15.8	46	7
NFC					
Ahmad Rashad, Minnesota	51	681	13.4	48	2
James Scott, Chicago	50	809	16.2	72	3
Drew Pearson, Dallas	48	870	18.1	67	2
Harold Jackson, Los Angeles	48	666	13.9	58	6
Harold Carmichael, Philadelphia	46	665	14.5	50	7
Preston Pearson, Dallas (rb)	46	535	11.6	36	4
Sammy White, Minnesota	41	760	18.5	69	9
Tony Galbreath, New Orleans (rb)	41	265	6.5	30	0

BEST PERFORMANCES

AFC—11 catches, 112 yards, Don McCauley, Baltimore vs. Denver, November 27

NFC—9 catches, 55 yards, Tony Galbreath, New Orleans vs. San Diego, October 9
9 catches, 166 yards, Morris Owens, Tampa Bay vs. Seattle, October 16

M. V. Rubio

Roger Staubach

Michael Zagaris

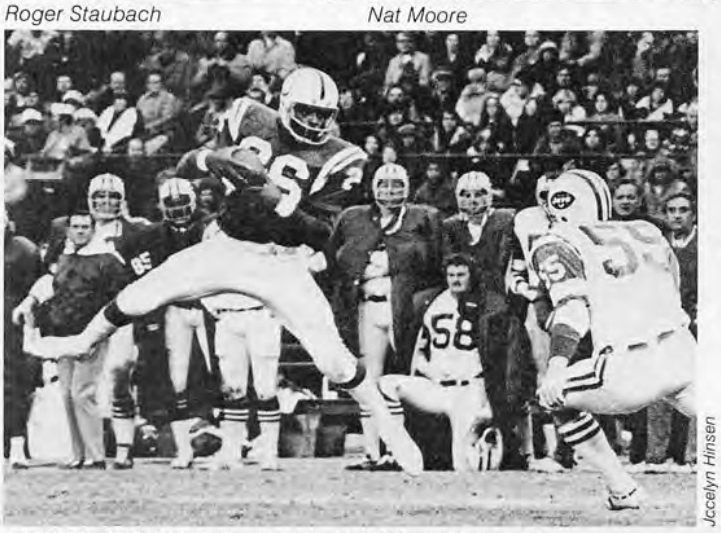
Nat Moore

LEADING INTERCEPTORS	No.	Yards	Long	TDs
AFC				
Lyle Blackwood, Baltimore	10	163	37	0
Tony Greene, Buffalo	9	144	47	0
Gary Barbaro, Kansas City	8	165	102	1
Mario Clark, Buffalo	7	151	43	0
Stan White, Baltimore	7	84	19	0
Jack Tatum, Oakland	6	146	41	0
Thom Darden, Cleveland	6	107	49	1
Mel Blount, Pittsburgh	6	65	37	0
Autry Beamon, Seattle	6	36	20	0
NFC				
Rolland Lawrence, Atlanta	7	138	36	0
Bill Simpson, Los Angeles	6	157	42	0
John Sanders, Philadelphia	6	122	45	0
James Hunter, Detroit	6	104	26	0
Allan Ellis, Chicago	6	23	11	0
Herman Edwards, Philadelphia	6	9	6	0

LONGEST INTERCEPTION RETURNS

AFC—102 yards, touchdown, Gary Barbaro, Kansas City vs. Seattle October 2

NFC—79 yards, touchdown, Thomas Henderson, Dallas vs. Tampa Bay, October 2
79 yards, touchdown, Mike Sensibaugh, St. Louis vs. N.Y. Giants, October 31



Jccelyn Hinsen

Lydell Mitchell, 71 catches to go with 1,159 rushing yards.

Scoring and Kicking

LEADING SCORERS, KICKING	EP	EPA	FG	FGA	Long	Pts.
AFC						
Errol Mann, Oakland	39	42	20	28	42	99
Toni Linhart, Baltimore	32	35	17	26	45	83
Chris Bahr, Cincinnati	25	26	19	27	47	82
Don Cockroft, Cleveland	30	31	17	23	44	81
John Smith, New England	33	33	15	21	44	78
Jim Turner, Denver	31	34	13	19	48	76*
Rolf Benirschke, San Diego	21	24	17	23	47	72
NFC						
Efren Herrera, Dallas	39	41	18	29	52	93
Rafael Septien, Los Angeles	32	35	18	30	45	86
Mark Moseley, Washington	19	19	21	37	54	82
Bob Thomas, Chicago	27	30	14	27	47	69
Joe Danelo, N.Y. Giants	19	20	14	23	51	61
Jim Bakken, St. Louis	35	36	7	16	49	56

*Scored one touchdown receiving

LEADING SCORERS, TOUCHDOWNS	TDs	Rush	Rec.	Ret.	Pts.
AFC					
Nat Moore, Miami	13	1	12	0	78
Franco Harris, Pittsburgh	11	11	0	0	66
Steve Largent, Seattle	10	0	10	0	60
Ken Burrough, Houston	8	0	8	0	48
Don McCauley, Baltimore	8	6	2	0	48
David Sims, Seattle	8	5	3	0	48
Billy Johnson, Houston	7	1	3	3	42
Lydell Mitchell, Baltimore	7	3	4	0	42
John Stallworth, Pittsburgh	7	0	7	0	42
Lynn Swann, Pittsburgh	7	0	7	0	42
Mark van Eeghen, Oakland	7	7	0	0	42
NFC					
Walter Payton, Chicago	16	14	2	0	96
Tony Dorsett, Dallas	13	12	1	0	78
Henry Childs, New Orleans	9	0	9	0	54
Chuck Foreman, Minnesota	9	6	3	0	54
Lawrence McCutcheon, Los Angeles	9	7	2	0	54
Wayne Morris, St. Louis	9	8	1	0	54
Sammy White, Minnesota	9	0	9	0	54
Delvin Williams, San Francisco	9	7	2	0	54
Harold Carmichael, Philadelphia	7	0	7	0	42
Wilbur Jackson, San Francisco	7	7	0	0	42
Chuck Muncie, New Orleans	7	6	1	0	42

BEST PERFORMANCES

AFC—18 points, three touchdowns, Nat Moore, Miami vs. San Francisco, September 25; Larry Poole, Cleveland vs. Pittsburgh, November 13; Nat Moore, Miami vs. St. Louis, November 24

NFC—24 points, four touchdowns, Wayne Morris, St. Louis vs. New Orleans, October 23

David Boss

Errol Mann

Arthur Anderson

Ray Guy

LEADING PUNTERS	No.	Yards	Long	Avg.	Touch-backs	Blkd.	Re-turned	Ret. Yds.	Inside 20	Net Avg.
AFC										
Ray Guy, Oakland	59	2552	74	43.3	14	0	31	217	11	34.8
Pat McInally, Cincinnati	67	2802	67	41.8	3	1	37	267	16	36.4
Jerrel Wilson, Kansas City	88	3510	59	39.9	5	1	50	702	11	30.4
Marv Bateman, Buffalo	81	3229	75	39.9	10	2	42	604	14	29.2
Herman Weaver, Seattle	58	2293	59	39.5	4	1	39	336	10	31.8
Cliff Parsley, Houston	77	3030	55	39.4	9	2	46	340	12	31.8
Bucky Dilts, Denver	90	3525	63	39.2	5	0	55	397	19	33.6
Greg Coleman, Cleveland	61	2389	58	39.2	2	0	31	558	23	29.4
NFC										
Tom Blanchard, New Orleans	82	3474	66	42.4	11	2	51	604	11	31.5
John James, Atlanta	105	4349	61	41.4	13	0	58	519	19	34.0
Bob Parsons, Chicago	80	3232	58	40.4	7	2	42	216	17	35.1
Dave Green, Tampa Bay	98	3948	70	40.3	6	1	71	469	16	33.9
Dave Jennings, N.Y. Giants	100	3993	58	39.9	4	0	67	680	19	32.3
David Beverly, Green Bay	85	3391	59	39.9	9	1	53	311	16	33.7
Neil Clabo, Minnesota	83	3302	69	39.8	11	0	42	507	19	31.0
Danny White, Dallas	80	3171	57	39.6	10	1	36	280	25	33.2

LONGEST PUNTS

AFC—75 yards, Marv Bateman, Buffalo vs. Washington, December 4

NFC—70 yards, Dave Green, Tampa Bay vs. Detroit, November 20

The revised punting table first used in 1976 better reflects a punter's effectiveness. The net average is arrived at by dividing the number of punts into the yards minus touchbacks (20 yards per touchback) and minus return yardage.

LEADING PUNT RETURNERS	No.	Yards	Avg.	Long	TDs
AFC					
Billy Johnson, Houston	35	539	15.4	87	2
Stanley Morgan, New England	16	220	13.8	53	0
Keith Moody, Buffalo	15	196	13.1	91	1
Mike Fuller, San Diego	28	360	12.9	88	1
Rick Upchurch, Denver	51	653	12.8	87	1
Bruce Harper, N.Y. Jets	34	425	12.5	49	0
Tony Davis, Cincinnati	19	220	11.6	70	0
John Kimbrough, Buffalo	16	184	11.5	73	1
Johnny Rodgers, San Diego	15	158	10.5	52	0
NFC					
Larry Marshall, Philadelphia	46	489	10.6	48	0
Bob Hammond, N.Y. Giants	32	334	10.4	68	1
Eddie Payton, Detroit	30	290	9.7	87	1
Steve Schubert, Chicago	31	291	9.4	70	1
Willard Harrell, Green Bay	28	253	9.0	75	1

LONGEST PUNT RETURNS

AFC—91 yards, touchdown, Keith Moody, Buffalo vs. Cleveland, October 23

NFC—87 yards, touchdown, Eddie Payton, Detroit vs. Minnesota, December 17

LEADING KICKOFF RETURNERS	No.	Yards	Avg.	Long	TDs
AFC					
Raymond Clayborn, New England	28	869	31.0	101	3
Gary Davis, Miami	14	414	29.6	73	0
Billy Johnson, Houston	25	640	25.6	76	1
Bruce Harper, N.Y. Jets	42	1035	24.6	60	0
Jim Smith, Pittsburgh	16	381	23.8	37	0
John Kimbrough, Buffalo	15	346	23.1	27	0
Laverne Smith, Pittsburgh	16	365	22.8	33	0
Rick Upchurch, Denver	20	456	22.8	32	0
Al Hunter, Seattle	36	820	22.8	41	0
NFC					
Wilbert Montgomery, Philadelphia	23	619	26.9	99	1
Clarence Chapman, New Orleans	15	385	25.7	92	1
Eddie Brown, Washington	34	852	25.1	46	0
Eddie Payton, Detroit	22	548	24.9	98	1
Butch Johnson, Dallas	22	536	24.4	64	0
Brian Baschnagel, Chicago	23	557	24.2	84	1
Terry Metcalf, St. Louis	32	772	24.1	51	0
Larry Brinson, Dallas	17	409	24.1	41	0
Paul Hofer, San Francisco	36	863	24.0	48	0
Rick Kane, Detroit	16	376	23.5	33	0
Isaac Hagins, Tampa Bay	21	493	23.5	41	0

LONGEST KICKOFF RETURNS

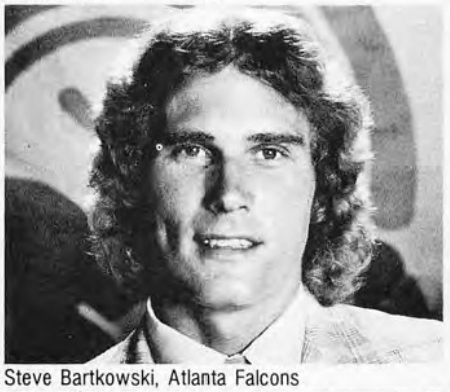
AFC—101 yards, touchdown, Raymond Clayborn, New England vs. Baltimore, December 18

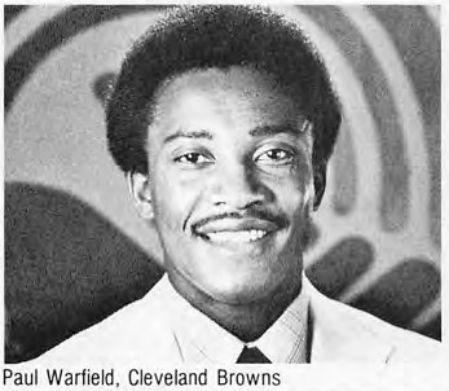
NFC—99 yards, touchdown, Wilbert Montgomery, Philadelphia vs. New York Giants, December 11

Curly Culp, Houston Oilers

Gene Upshaw, Oakland Raiders

Russ Francis, New England Patriots


Steve Bartkowski, Atlanta Falcons


Paul Warfield, Cleveland Browns

Eddie Brown, Washington Redskins

Greg Landry, Detroit Lions

Harvey Martin, Dallas Cowboys

Vince Papale, Philadelphia Eagles

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Super Bowl Records

Compiled by the Elias Sports Bureau

I	Jan. 15, 1967 Green Bay 35, Kansas City 10
II	Jan. 14, 1968 Green Bay 33, Oakland 14
III	Jan. 12, 1969 New York Jets 16, Baltimore 7
IV	Jan. 11, 1970 Kansas City 23, Minnesota 7
V	Jan. 17, 1971 Baltimore 16, Dallas 13
VI	Jan. 16, 1972 Dallas 24, Miami 3
VII	Jan. 14, 1973 Miami 14, Washington 7
VIII	Jan. 13, 1974 Miami 24, Minnesota 7
IX	Jan. 12, 1975 Pittsburgh 16, Minnesota 6
X	Jan. 18, 1976 Pittsburgh 21, Dallas 17
XI	Jan. 9, 1977 Oakland 32, Minnesota 14

Individual Records

Service

Most games
- 5 Marv Fleming, Green Bay, I and II; Miami, VI, VII, and VIII
- 4 Herb Adderley, Green Bay, I and II; Dallas, V and VI
- Earl Morrall, Baltimore, III and V; Miami, VII and VIII
- Fred Cox, Minnesota, IV, VIII, IX, and XI
- Carl Eller, Minnesota, IV, VIII, IX, and XI
- Wally Hilgenberg, Minnesota, IV, VIII, IX, and XI
- Paul Krause, Minnesota, IV, VIII, IX, and XI
- Jim Marshall, Minnesota, IV, VIII, IX, and XI
- Alan Page, Minnesota, IV, VIII, IX, and XI
- Mick Tingelhoff, Minnesota, IV, VIII, IX, and XI
- Ed White, Minnesota, IV, VIII, IX, and XI
- Roy Winston, Minnesota, IV, VIII, IX, and XI
- Ron Yary, Minnesota, IV, VIII, IX, and XI

Scoring

Most points, career
- 20 Don Chandler, Green Bay, 2 games
- 13 Mike Clark, Dallas, 2 games

Most points, game
- 15 Don Chandler, Green Bay, II (4 fg, 3 pat)

Most touchdowns, career
- 2 Max McGee, Green Bay, 2 games (2 p)
- Elijah Pitts, Green Bay, 1 game (2 r)
- Bill Miller, Oakland, 1 game (2 p)
- Duane Thomas, Dallas, 2 games (1 r, 1 p)
- Jim Kiick, Miami, 3 games (2 r)
- Larry Csonka, Miami, 3 games (2 r)
- Pete Banaszak, Oakland, 2 games (2 r)

Most touchdowns, game
- 2 Max McGee, Green Bay, I (2 p)
- Elijah Pitts, Green Bay, I (2 r)
- Bill Miller, Oakland, II (2 p)
- Larry Csonka, Miami, VIII (2 r)
- Pete Banaszak, Oakland, XI (2 r)

Most points after touchdown, career
- 8 Don Chandler, Green Bay, 2 games (8 att)
- 5 Garo Yepremian, Miami, 3 games (5 att)

Most points after touchdown, game
- 5 Don Chandler, Green Bay, I (5 att)

Most field goals attempted, career
- 6 Roy Gerela, Pittsburgh, 2 games
- 5 Jim Turner, N.Y. Jets, 1 game

Most field goals attempted, game
- 5 Jim Turner, New York Jets, III

Most field goals, career
- 4 Don Chandler, Green Bay, 2 games (4 att)
- 3 Mike Clark, Dallas, 2 games (3 att)
- Jan Stenerud, Kansas City, 1 game (3 att)
- Jim Turner, N.Y. Jets, 1 game (5 att)

Most field goals, game
- 4 Don Chandler, Green Bay, II

Longest field goal
- 48 Jan Stenerud, Kansas City, IV

Most safeties, game
- 1 Dwight White, Pittsburgh, IX
- Reggie Harrison, Pittsburgh, X

Rushing

Most attempts, career
- 61 Franco Harris, Pittsburgh, 2 games
- 57 Larry Csonka, Miami, 3 games

Most attempts, game
- 34 Franco Harris, Pittsburgh, IX

Most yards gained, career
- 297 Larry Csonka, Miami, 3 games
- 240 Franco Harris, Pittsburgh, 2 games

Most yards gained, game
- 158 Franco Harris, Pittsburgh, IX

Longest gain
- 58 Tom Matte, Baltimore, III

Most touchdowns, career
- 2 Elijah Pitts, Green Bay, 1 game
- Jim Kiick, Miami, 3 games
- Larry Csonka, Miami, 3 games
- Pete Banaszak, Oakland, 2 games

Most touchdowns, game
- 2 Elijah Pitts, Green Bay, I
- Larry Csonka, Miami, VIII
- Pete Banaszak, Oakland, XI

Passing

Most attempts, career
- 89 Fran Tarkenton, Minnesota, 3 games (46 comp)
- 47 Bart Starr, Green Bay, 2 games (29 comp)

Most attempts, game
- 35 Fran Tarkenton, Minnesota, XI (17 comp)

Most completions, career
- 46 Fran Tarkenton, Minnesota, 3 games (89 att)
- 29 Bart Starr, Green Bay, 2 games (47 att)

Most completions, game
- 18 Fran Tarkenton, Minnesota, VIII (28 att)

Highest efficiency, career, 30 or more attempts
- 63.6 Len Dawson, Kansas City, 2 games (28-44)
- 63.4 Bob Griese, Miami, 3 games (26-41)

Highest efficiency, game, 10 or more attempts
- 72.7 Bob Griese, Miami, VII (8-11)

Most yards gained, career
- 489 Fran Tarkenton, Minnesota, 3 games
- 452 Bart Starr, Green Bay, 2 games

Most yards gained, game
- 250 Bart Starr, Green Bay, I

Longest completion
- 75 John Unitas (to Mackey), Baltimore, V (TD)

Most touchdowns, career
- 4 Roger Staubach, Dallas, 2 games
- 3 Bart Starr, Green Bay, 2 games
- Terry Bradshaw, Pittsburgh, 2 games

Most touchdowns, game
- 2 Bart Starr, Green Bay, I
- Daryle Lamonica, Oakland, II
- Roger Staubach, Dallas, VI
- Terry Bradshaw, Pittsburgh, X

Fewest had intercepted, most attempts, game
- 0 Joe Namath, New York Jets, III (28 att)

Most had intercepted, career
- 6 Fran Tarkenton, Minnesota, 3 games (89 att)
- 4 Earl Morrall, Baltimore & Miami, 4 games (32 att)

Most had intercepted, game
- 3 Earl Morrall, Baltimore, III (17 att)
- Craig Morton, Dallas, V (26 att)
- Bill Kilmer, Washington, VII (28 att)
- Fran Tarkenton, Minnesota, IX (26 att)
- Roger Staubach, Dallas, X (24 att)

Pass receptions

Most receptions, career
- 15 Chuck Foreman, Minnesota, 3 games
- 10 Otis Taylor, Kansas City, 2 games

Most receptions, game
- 8 George Sauer, New York Jets, III (133 yards)

Most yards gained, career
- 173 Max McGee, Green Bay, 2 games
- 161 Lynn Swann, Pittsburgh, 2 games

Most yards gained, game
- 161 Lynn Swann, Pittsburgh, X

Longest reception
- 75 John Mackey (from Unitas), Baltimore V (TD)

Most touchdowns, career
- 2 Max McGee, Green Bay, 2 games
- Bill Miller, Oakland, 1 game

Most touchdowns, game
- 2 Max McGee, Green Bay, I
- Bill Miller, Oakland, II

Interceptions by

Most interceptions by, career
- 3 Chuck Howley, Dallas, 2 games
- 2 Randy Beverly, N.Y. Jets, 1 game
- Jake Scott, Miami, 3 games
- Mike Wagner, Pittsburgh, 2 games

Most interceptions by, game
- 2 Randy Beverly, N.Y. Jets, III
- Chuck Howley, Dallas, V
- Jake Scott, Miami, VII

Most yards gained, career
- 75 Willie Brown, Oakland, 2 games
- 63 Chuck Howley, Dallas, 2 games
- Jake Scott, Miami, 3 games

Most yards gained, game
- 75 Willie Brown, Oakland, XI

Longest gain
- 75 Willie Brown, Oakland, XI (TD)

Most touchdowns, game
- 1 Herb Adderley, Green Bay, II
- Willie Brown, Oakland, XI

Punting

Most punts, career
- 17 Mike Eischeid, Oakland and Minnesota, 3 games
- 15 Larry Seiple, Miami, 3 games

Most punts, game
- 9 Ron Widby, Dallas, V

Longest punt
- 61 Jerrel Wilson, Kansas City, I

Highest punting average, game, 3 minimum
- 48.5 Jerrel Wilson, Kansas City, IV (4 punts)

Punt returns

Most punt returns, career
- 6 Willie Wood, Green Bay, 2 games
- Jake Scott, Miami, 3 games
- 4 By six players

Most punt returns, game
- 5 Willie Wood, Green Bay, II (35 yards)

Most fair catches, game
- 3 Ron Gardin, Baltimore, V
- Golden Richards, Dallas, X

Most yards gained, career
- 45 Jake Scott, Miami, 3 games
- 43 Neal Colzie, Oakland, 1 game

Most yards gained, game
- 43 Neal Colzie, Oakland, XI (4 ret)

Longest punt return
- 31 Willie Wood, Green Bay, II

Highest average, game, 3 minimum
- 11.3 Lynn Swann, Pittsburgh, IX (8)

Most touchdowns, game
None

Kickoff returns

Most kickoff returns, career
- 7 Preston Pearson, Baltimore, Pittsburgh, and Dallas, 3 games
- 6 Mercury Morris, Miami, 3 games

Most kickoff returns, game
- 4 Bert Coan, Kansas city, I (87 yards)
- Jim Duncan, Baltimore, V (90 yards)
- Mercury Morris, Miami, VI (90 yards)
- Preston Pearson, Dallas, X (48 yards)
- Sammy White, Minnesota, XI (79 yards)

Most yards gained, career
- 123 Mercury Morris, Miami, 3 games
- 122 Preston Pearson, Baltimore, Pittsburgh, and Dallas, 3 games

Most yards gained, game
- 90 Jim Duncan, Baltimore, V (4 ret)
- Mercury Morris, Miami, VI (4 ret)

Longest kickoff return
- 48 Thomas Henderson, Dallas, X (received lateral pass after 5-yard return by Preston Pearson)

Highest average, game, 3 minimum
- 22.5 Jim Duncan, Baltimore, V (4 ret)
- Mercury Morris, Miami, VI (4 ret)

Most touchdowns, game
None

Fumbles

Most fumbles, career
- 3 Franco Harris, Pittsburgh, 2 games
- Roger Staubach, Dallas, 2 games
- 2 Jake Scott, Miami, 3 games
- Franco Harris, Pittsburgh 1 game
- Fran Tarkenton, Minnesota, 2 games
- Bobby Walden, Pittsburgh, 2 games

Most fumbles, game
- 3 Roger Staubach, Dallas, X

Most fumbles recovered, career
- 2 Jake Scott, Miami, 3 games (1 own, 1 opp)
- Fran Tarkenton, Minnesota, 2 games (2 own)
- Franco Harris, Pittsburgh, 2 games (2 own)
- Roger Staubach, Dallas, 2 games (2 own)
- Bobby Walden, Pittsburgh, 2 games (2 own)

Most fumbles recovered, game
2 Jake Scott, Miami, VIII (1 own, 1 opp)
Roger Staubach, Dallas, X (2 own)
Most yards gained, game
49 Mike Bass, Washington, VII (opp)
Most touchdowns, game
1 Mike Bass, Washington, VII

Team Records

Scoring

Most points, game
35 Green Bay, I
Fewest points, game
3 Miami, VI
Most points, both teams, game
47 Green Bay (33) vs. Oakland (14), II
Fewest points, both teams, game
21 Washington (7) vs. Miami (14), VII
Most points, each quarter
1st: 14 Miami, VIII
2nd: 16 Oakland, XI
3rd: 14 Green Bay, I
4th: 14 Pittsburgh, X
Most points, both teams, each quarter
1st: 14 Miami (14) vs. Minnesota (0), VIII
Pittsburgh (7) vs. Dallas (7), X
2nd: 20 Green Bay (13) vs. Oakland (7), II
3rd: 14 Green Bay (14) vs. Kansas City (0), IV
Kansas City (7) vs. Minnesota (7), IV
4th: 21 Pittsburgh (14) vs. Dallas (7), X
Most touchdowns, game
5 Green Bay, I
Fewest touchdowns, game
0 Miami, VI
Most touchdowns, both teams, game
6 Green Bay (5) vs. Kansas City (1), I
Fewest touchdowns, both teams, game
2 Baltimore (1) vs. New York Jets (1), III
Most points after touchdown, game
5 Green Bay, I
Most points after touchdown, both teams, game
6 Green Bay (5) vs. Kansas City (1), I
Oakland (4) vs. Minnesota (2), XI
Most field goals attempted, game
5 New York Jets, III
Most field goals attempted, both teams, game
7 New York Jets (5) vs. Baltimore (2), III
Fewest field goals attempted, both teams, game
1 Minnesota (0) vs. Miami (1), VIII
Most field goals, game
4 Green Bay, II
Most field goals, both teams, game
4 Green Bay (4) vs. Oakland (0), II
Fewest field goals, both teams, game
0 Miami vs. Washington, VII
Pittsburgh vs. Minnesota, IX
Most safeties, game
1 Pittsburgh vs. Minnesota, IX
Pittsburgh vs. Dallas, X

First downs

Most first downs, game
23 Dallas, VI
Most first downs, both teams, game
41 Oakland (21) vs. Minnesota (20), XI
Fewest first downs, both teams, game
24 Dallas (10) vs. Baltimore (14), V
Most first downs, rushing, game
15 Dallas, VI
Fewest first downs, rushing, game
2 Minnesota, IV and IX
Most first downs, rushing, both teams, game
18 Dallas (15) vs. Miami (3), VI
Miami (13) vs. Minnesota (5), VIII
Fewest first downs, rushing, both teams, game
8 Baltimore (4) vs. Dallas (4), V
Most first downs, passing, game
15 Minnesota, XI
Fewest first downs, passing, game
4 Miami, VIII
Most first downs, passing, both teams, game
23 Kansas City (12) vs. Green Bay (11), I
Minnesota (15) vs. Oakland (8), XI
Fewest first downs, passing, both teams, game
10 Minnesota (5) vs. Pittsburgh (5), IX
Most first downs, penalty, game
4 Baltimore, V
Miami, VIII

Net yards gained

Most yards gained, game
429 Oakland, XI
Fewest yards gained, game
119 Minnesota, IX
Most yards gained, both teams, game
782 Oakland (429) vs. Minnesota (353), XI
Fewest yards gained, both teams, game
452 Minnesota (119) vs. Pittsburgh (333), IX

Rushing

Most attempts, game
57 Pittsburgh, IX
Fewest attempts, game
19 Kansas City, I
Minnesota, IV
Most attempts, both teams, game
78 Pittsburgh (57) vs. Minnesota (21), IX
Oakland (52) vs. Minnesota (26), XI
Fewest attempts, both teams, game
52 Kansas City (19) vs. Green Bay (33), I
Most yards gained, game
266 Oakland, XI
Fewest yards gained, game
17 Minnesota, IX
Most yards gained, both teams, game
337 Oakland (266) vs. Minnesota (71)
Fewest yards gained, both teams, game
171 Baltimore (69) vs. Dallas (102), V

Marv Fleming: Five Super Bowls.

Most touchdowns, game
3 Green Bay, I
Miami, VIII
Fewest touchdowns, game
0 By seven teams
Most touchdowns, both teams, game
4 Miami (3) vs. Minnesota (1), VIII
Fewest touchdowns, both teams, game
0 Pittsburgh vs. Dallas, X

Passing

Most passes attempted, game
44 Minnesota, XI
Fewest passes attempted, game
7 Miami, VIII
Most passes attempted, both teams, game
70 Baltimore (41) vs. New York Jets (29), III
Fewest passes attempted, both teams, game
35 Miami (7) vs. Minnesota (28), VIII
Most passes completed, game
24 Minnesota, XI
Fewest passes completed, game
6 Miami, VIII
Most passes completed, both teams, game
36 Minnesota (24) vs. Oakland (12), XI
Fewest passes completed, both teams, game
20 Pittsburgh (9) vs. Minnesota (11), IX
Most yards gained, game
282 Minnesota, XI
Fewest yards gained, game
63 Miami, VIII
Most yards gained, both teams, game
445 Minnesota (282) vs. Oakland (163), XI
Fewest yards gained, both teams, game
156 Miami (69) vs. Washingotn (87), VII
Most times tackled attempting passes, game
7 Dallas, X
Fewest times tackled attempting passes, game
0 Baltimore, III and V
Minnesota, IX
Most times tackled attempting passes, both teams, game
9 Kansas City (6) vs. Green Bay (3), I
Dallas (7) vs. Pittsburgh (2), X
Fewest times tackled att. passes, both teams, game
2 Baltimore (0) vs. New York Jets (2), III
Baltimore (0) vs. Dallas (2), V
Minnesota (0) vs. Pittsburgh (2), IX
Most touchdowns, game
2 Green Bay, I
Oakland, II
Dallas, VI
Pittsburgh, X
Minnesota, XI
Fewest touchdowns, game
0 Baltimore, III
New York Jets, III
Minnesota, IV, VIII, and IX
Miami, VI and VIII
Washington, VII
Most touchdowns, both teams, game
4 Pittsburgh (2) vs. Dallas (2), X

Interceptions by

Most Interceptions by, game
4 New York Jets, III
Most yards gained, game
95 Miami, VII
Most interceptions by, both teams, game
6 Baltimore (3) vs. Dallas (3), V
Most touchdowns, game
1 Green Bay, II
Oakland, XI

Punting

Most punts, game
9 Dallas, V
Fewest punts, game
3 Baltimore, III
Minnesota, IV
Miami, VIII
Most punts, both teams, game
13 Dallas (9) vs. Baltimore (4), V
Pittsburgh (7) vs. Minnesota (6), IX
Fewest punts, both teams, game
7 Baltimore (3) vs. New York Jets (4), III
Minnesota (3) vs. Kansas City (4), IV
Highest average, game
48.5 Kansas City, IV (4 punts)
Lowest average, game
31.2 Washington, VII (5 punts)

Punt returns

Most punt returns, game
5 Green Bay, II
Baltimore, V
Pittsburgh, IX and X
Fewest punt returns, game
0 Minnesota, VIII
Most punt returns, both teams, game
9 Pittsburgh (5) vs. M (4), IX
Fewest punt returns, both teams, game
2 Dallas (1) vs. Miami (1), VI
Most yards gained, game
43 Oakland, XI
Fewest yards gained, game
−1 Dallas, VI (1)
Most yards gained, both teams, game
57 Oakland (43) vs. Minnesota (14), XI
Fewest yards gained, both teams, game
13 Miami (4) vs. Washington (9), VII
Highest average gain, game
9.0 Minnesota, IV (2 ret)
Most touchdowns, game
None

Kickoff returns

Most kickoff returns, game
7 Oakland, II
Minnesota, XI
Fewest kickoff returns, game
1 New York Jets, III
Most kickoff returns, both teams, game
10 Oakland (7) vs. Green Bay (3), II
Fewest kickoff returns, both teams, game
5 New York Jets (1) vs. Baltimore (4), III
Miami (2) vs. Washington (3), VII
Most yards gained, game
136 Minnesota, XI
Fewest yards gained, game
25 New York Jets, III (1 ret)
Most yards gained, both teams, game
195 Kansas City (130) vs. Green Bay (65), I
Fewest yards gained, both teams, game
78 Miami (33) vs. Washington (45), VII
Highest average gain, game
26.3 Baltimore, II (4)
Most touchdowns, game
None

Penalties

Most penalties, game
10 Dallas, V
Fewest penalties, game
0 Miami, VI
Pittsburgh, X
Most penalties, both teams, game
14 Dallas (10) vs. Baltimore (4), V
Fewest penalties, both teams, game
2 Pittsburgh (0) vs. Dallas (2), X
Most yards, game
133 Dallas, V
Most yards, both teams, game
164 Dallas (133) vs. Baltimore (31), V
Fewest yards, both teams, game
15 Miami (0) vs. Dallas (15), VI

Fumbles

Most fumbles, game
5 Baltimore, V
Fewest fumbles, game
0 Green Bay, II
Kansas City, IV
Oakland, XI
Most fumbles, both teams, game
8 Pittsburgh (4) vs. Dallas (4), X
Fewest fumbles, both teams, game
1 Oakland (0) vs. Minnesota (1), XI
Most fumbles recovered, game
4 Pittsburgh, IX (2 own, 2 opp)
Dallas, X (4 own)

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